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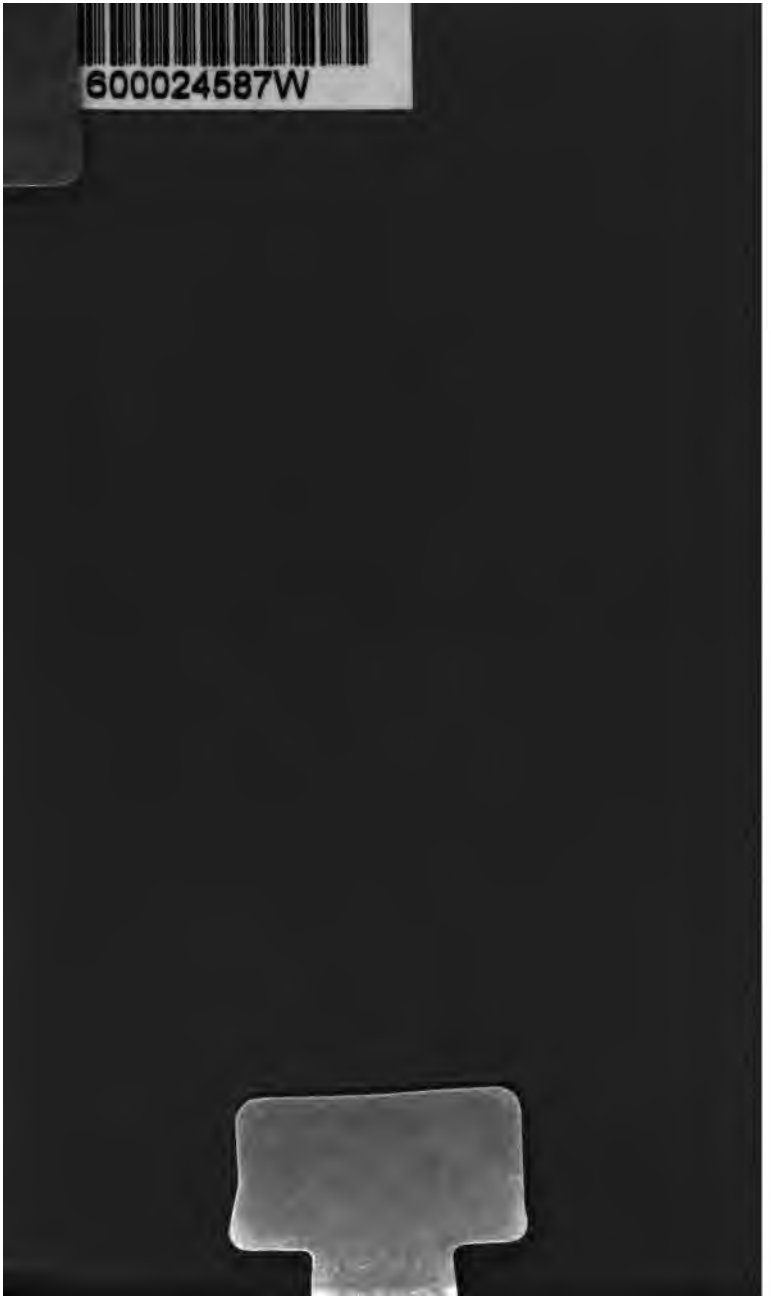
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MEMOIRS

OF

SIR THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON,

BART.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

CHARLES BUXTON, M.A., M.P.

WITH AN

INQUIRY INTO THE RESULTS OF EMANCIPATION.

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AN INQUIRY

INTO THE

RESULTS OF EMANCIPATION,*

By CHARLES BUXTON.

A HUNDRED years ago, when black men were seldom seen north of the Tweed, an old Scotch gentlewoman meeting a negro in the street, cast up her eyes and hands, exclaiming, "Hech, sirs, what canna be made for the penny!" And well might the British people do the same. At a cost, not of one penny, but of five thousand million pennies, we have produced that curious specimen of the human race, the free negro of the West Indies. Such was the outlay. Now, what is the result? What sort of thing have we got for our money? Was that a wise investment of capital?

The reply of some high authorities has been given, and is this — Our islands, they say, the richest and loveliest in the world, are fallen from wealth to ruin — crumbling, deserted, desolate towns — empty harbours — trade gone — agriculture at death's door — the old staples vanished away — the owners of these once fertile lands languishing in poverty, or dead of broken hearts—the negroes, for whom all was done, "sunk up to the ears in pumpkin," growing every day more savage, more idle, more beastly. Such, they tell us, is the work that our philanthropy has worked out under the sun. Now, is that so, or is it not so? The subject deserves some thought. England's giving freedom to her slaves was an act unique in the history of man. We know not where an example can be found of so noble a sacrifice made by a whole people. As to its prudence, some may think one thing, and some an-

* This Essay appeared in the April number of the *Edinburgh Review*, 1859. It has been thought worth while to prefix it to these Memoirs, in order to shew, from irrefragable statistics and official reports, that the work to which my father's life was given has not proved, as many suppose, a failure.

other; but no man can lay it at the door of any selfish feeling. The people of the United Kingdom believed slavery to be cruel. It seemed to them a breach of the law of love which the gospel had laid down. For these reasons, and for these alone, they made up their minds to be rid of it. But they were not hurried away by their zeal; they chose to pay the cost themselves; and £20,000,000 was paid down by them to get the slaves set free. To us, who saw this done, it may seem an every-day affair. But seen from afar, in the coming ages, it may strike men as sublime.

Was it, after all, an act of shining folly? Has it really wrought woe and not weal in the world? It is worth while to find out the true reply to these questions. For if all this were so, then that noble old maxim, that "Right never comes wrong," would be overthrown. Here we have a nation plainly setting itself to do right, "because right was right;" because it thought more of what was due to God and man, than of itself. Has this been a failure? has this done harm and not good? then it may be unwise to do right. Wrong, perhaps, might as well be kept going. The laws of God and the rights of man may be well enough in their way, but should we obey the one, or observe the other, we may find ourselves made fools of.

We are far indeed from denying that the owners of West Indian property have gone through a time of deep distress. The cry of despair that rose from them in 1847, and the next years, was appalling. Many and many a family once blessed with opulence sank into poverty, while hundreds of others had their fortunes shattered, if not destroyed. No wonder such an overthrow should have been loudly noised, not only through England, but through the world, and that emancipation should be looked upon as having given the death-blow to our once thriving colonies. People were not likely to bear in mind that, however sad these events might be, still the great outcry arose fourteen years after slavery (ten years after the apprenticeship) had been done away, and at once upon a change of a wholly different kind. Nor could they have been expected to remember that the cries of distress came, not from the whole population of those islands, but mainly from the proprietors living in England, whose voice therefore rang the louder, but might not be the voice of the mass of the people. It was natural for the world to think that the whole of our sugar colonies were sinking into ruin, though the out-

cry came from some of them, but not from others. It was natural for the world to think that when it no longer heard "that most outrageous dreadful yelling cry" (to quote the Fairy Queen,) it was hushed in death, though in truth it ceased because the pinch was over. No wonder the world fancies that our sugar colonies are as good as swept off the face of the earth, though in fact they are swiftly becoming a gem in the British crown, of higher value than they ever were before.

A long and thorough investigation of the case has borne us irresistibly to the conclusion, that in these assumptions the world has been wrong; and if the reader will go with us through the following pages, we think he will agree with us in believing that, even if we set aside all thoughts but thoughts of pounds, shillings, and pence — as a dry question of economy — emancipation has *paid;* that it was an act of prudence for which we, as a nation of shopkeepers, need not blush before that golden god whom we are thought to worship so eagerly. We shall bring forward what seem to us conclusive reasons for the persuasion that, had England not cared a jot for those noble principles that really nerved her to the work, had she only kept a shrewd look-out for the main chance, it was not weak but wise of her to free her slaves.

This, then, is the plain question to which we have sought out the reply. Taking no thought, for the nonce, of humanity, morality, Christianity — looking to the pocket alone — has emancipation answered, or been a blunder? Good and kindly meant as it undoubtedly was, is the world the worse off for it, or the better off for it? Did the philanthropists ruin the West Indies? or did they save the West Indies from imminent, irretrievable ruin, and set them on the road to a prosperity at once sound and splendid? Let that be the test of the great experiment of 1834. Has it plunged the former slave colonies into hopeless ruin? then never mind its nobleness, let it stand condemned. But if the distress which fell on the West Indies in 1847 can be clearly traced to other causes; if it was only a passing storm; if, those other causes being spent, freedom is now working out a well-being that was unknown in the days of slavery—then, we say, let emancipation stand approved in the sight of all the world.

And this it is which the facts before us seem to prove. They shew that slavery was bearing our colonies down to ruin with awful speed; that had it lasted but another half

century, they must have sunk beyond recovery. On the other hand, that now, under freedom and free trade, they are growing day by day more rich and prosperous; with spreading trade, with improving agriculture, with a more educated, industrious, and virtuous people; while the comfort of the quondam slaves is increased beyond the power of words to portray.

Never was a more radical revolution made in the fortunes of a whole people, than when the 800,000 British negroes stepped from slavery into freedom. When the clock began to strike twelve on the night of July 31, 1834, they were, in the eye of the law, things, chattels, beasts of burden, the mere property of others. When it had ceased to sound, they were for the first time, not only free men but *men;* standing on the same level as those who had formerly owned them. The whole form of things became so thoroughly new, that it is now no easy matter to paint oneself a living picture of a state of society which has been so utterly swept away; but of its more salient features hints enough remain. And we must say that in glancing through the piles of information on the state of the slave colonies accumulated during the anti-slavery struggle, we have been amazed at the breadth and depth of the cruelty which slavery was shewn to beget. There are those who jog along in the easy and pleasant belief that the plantations had been under kindly government, and that the tales of barbarity that used to be rife years and years ago, were for the most part mere wind. We have had but too much reason to change our minds on this head. And yet, though the shadows of slavery were dark, and too often terrible, there seems to have been a good play of sunlight upon it as well; and, luckily, a charming picture of the bright side of slavery has been preserved for us by "Monk" Lewis, who was not only a man of poetical feeling, but of a most kind nature, and who went to see his estates mainly from a sense of duty towards his slaves. He reached Jamaica on the 1st of January, (1816,) the severe work of crop time just over, and the negroes at their best and merriest. The air was delicious. The fragrance of the sweet wood and other scented trees put him in mind of "the buxom air, embalmed with odours" of Paradise, while the scenery was highly picturesque, from the lively green of the vegetation and the hermitage-like appearance of the negro buildings, all situated in little gardens, and embosomed in sweet-smelling shrubberies. The joy of the

slaves at seeing massa, if not deep, was at least noisy. They sang, danced, shouted, and tumbled over each other, and rolled about on the ground, while every man, woman, and child chattered its loudest. The mothers held up their little shining black imps, grinning from ear to ear, with "Look, massa, look here; him nice lilly neger for massa." Nor was female loveliness wanting to complete the picture; but was well represented by Mary Wiggins, whose complexion had no yellow in it; teeth admirable, eyes mild and bright, and a face merely broad enough to give it "all possible softness and grandness of contour." Many old servants of the family (which at that time lived on the estate) came to see him, and shewed such warmth and enthusiasm that after the cold manners of England the contrast was infinitely agreeable, and his heart expanded in the sunshine of the kind looks and words which met him at every turn, and seemed to wait for his smiles as anxiously as if they were so many diamonds. On three sides the landscape was bounded by purple mountains, and the variety of occupations going on all around gave an inconceivable air of life and animation to the whole scene, especially as all those occupations looked cleanly. The tradespeople were dressed in jackets and trousers, either white, or of red and sky-blue stripe. Here a band of negroes carrying the ripe canes on their heads to the mill; another set conveying away the *trash*, after the juice had been extracted; flocks of turkeys sheltering from the heat under the trees; the river filled with ducks and geese; the coopers and carpenters hammering at the puncheons; carts drawn, some by six, some by eight oxen, bringing loads of Indian corn from the fields; the black children gathering it in to the granary, or quarrelling with pigs as black as themselves, who were equally busy in stealing the corn whenever the children were looking another way: such was the scene which met Mr Lewis's eyes as he stood in his veranda; and, "in short," he adds, "a plantation possesses all the movement and interest of a farm, without its dung, and its stench, and its dirty accompaniments."

Such was the Arcadian felicity of a slave plantation under the eye of a kind and opulent owner. But it would seem that even such an Eden as this shared the lot of the rest of the earth, of which Goethe's angel Gabriel tells us—

"Es wechselt Paradieses-Helle
Mit tiefer schauervoller Nacht."

For though under the mild sway of Mr Lewis all flowed so sweetly, by degrees he found things out that did not please him. Nay, his own way of putting it is, that "nothing could equal" his "anger and surprise" when he discovered what had been going on before his coming was looked for. His father had always filled his letters with the most positive orders for the good treatment of the slaves, and had chosen a first-rate agent. Yet this man, from mere sloth, had let an overseer treat them so savagely that at one time "they had been driven absolutely into rebellion, and almost every slave of respectability had been compelled to become a runaway." . . . . "If I had not come to Jamaica myself," he adds, "in all probability I should never have had the most distant idea *how abominably the poor creatures had been ill used.*" And then his own agent said nothing plainly, but shook his head, and gave poor Lewis evidently to understand that the slaves could not be governed without the cart-whip. In fact, the need of that stimulus soon grew plain, for the production of sugar fell from thirty-three hogsheads a-week (before his coming) down to thirteen! "The negroes certainly are perverse beings," is the reflection he made. But he was not long in finding that whites are "perverse beings" too, for some alarmed planters actually wanted the grand jury at Montego Bay to prosecute him for over-indulgence to his own slaves! While to his great mortification, on visiting his other estate, which he "had expected to find a perfect paradise," it proved to be "a hell upon earth."

And what a hell upon earth a plantation was, under a sharp master, is so vividly set forth in a plain, unvarnished account written by Mr Whitely, who was book-keeper (clerk) on the New Ground Plantation, near St Ann's Bay, in Jamaica, in 1832, that we shall venture to extract one of the many scenes that he describes:—

"12*th instance.*—The first of these two cases was that of a married woman, the mother of several children. She was brought up to the overseer's door one morning, and one of the drivers who came with her accused her of having stolen a fowl. Some feathers, said to have been found in her hut, were exhibited as evidence of her guilt. The overseer asked her if she could pay for the fowl. She said something in reply which I did not clearly understand. The question was repeated, and a similar reply again given. The overseer then said, 'Put her down.' On this the woman set up a shriek, and rent the air with her cries of terror. Her countenance grew quite ghastly, and her lips became pale and livid. I was close to her, and particularly noticed her

remarkable aspect and expression of countenance. The overseer swore fearfully, and repeated his order, 'Put her down!' The woman was then extended on the ground and held down by two negroes. Her gown and shift were literally torn from her back, and, thus brutally exposed, she was subjected to the cart-whip. The punishment inflicted on this poor creature was inhumanly severe. She was a woman somewhat plump in her person, and the whip being wielded with great vigour, every stroke cut deep into the flesh. She writhed and twisted her body violently under the infliction,—moaning loudly, but uttering no exclamation in words, except once, when she cried out entreating that her nakedness might not be indecently exposed,—appearing to suffer from matronly modesty even more acutely on account of her indecent exposure, than the cruel laceration of her body. But the overseer only noticed her appeal by a brutal reply, and the flogging continued. Disgusted as I was, I witnessed the whole to a close. I numbered the lashes, stroke by stroke, and counted *fifty*, thus exceeding by eleven the number allowed by the colonial law to be inflicted at the arbitrary will of the master or manager. This was the only occasion on which I saw the legal number of thirty-nine lashes exceeded; but I never knew the overseer or head book-keeper give less than thirty-nine. This poor victim was shockingly lacerated. When permitted to rise she again shrieked violently. The overseer swore roughly, and threatened if she was not quiet, to put her down again. He then ordered her to be taken to the hot-house, or hospital, and put in the stocks. She was to be continued in the stocks for several nights, while she worked in the yard during the day at light work. She was too severely mangled to be able to go to the field for some days."

Nor could these sickening severities have been at all unusual. For in the four "crown colonies," * the home government was able to do what it pleased, and accordingly it required every planter to give in sworn returns of the punishments inflicted on his estate. By these sworn returns there were registered, in the two years 1828–9, 68,921 punishments. The law allowed, in the crown colonies, twenty-five stripes to a punishment, which limit was incessantly passed. Taking the average, however, at but twenty stripes, this puts the total amount of stripes inflicted, in regular floggings, for these four colonies alone, in two years, at no less than one million three hundred and fifty thousand! Twenty-five thousand and ninety-four punishments, or, at that rate, half a million of those stripes were sworn to as having been inflicted upon *females*.†

That the whip, and the dread of the whip, must have caused an unspeakable amount of physical and moral misery, is then plain enough. In this respect emancipation has beyond all question caused a vast accession to human happiness, in that it has substituted the attraction of rewards for

* Guiana, (at that time divided,) Trinidad, St Lucia.
† Protector's Reports, Parl. Papers.

the compulsion of terror. But by far the most portentous and striking of the features of West Indian society under slavery was this, that while the free negroes were steadily advancing in number, the slaves were dying off at a rate which was described at the time as "appalling."

It was not by stories of atrocious cruelty that the eyes of Parliament were opened to the wickedness and folly of slavery. If any of our readers would turn to the pages of Hansard, they would find that what gave the death-blow to slavery, in the minds of English statesmen, was the population return, which shewed the fact, "the appalling" fact, that although only eleven out of the eighteen islands had sent them in, yet in those eleven islands the slaves had decreased in twelve years by no less than 60,219: namely, from 558,194 to 497,975!* Had similar returns been procured from the other seven colonies, (including Mauritius, Antigua, Barbadoes, and Grenada,) the decrease must have been little, if at all, less than 100,000! Now it was plain to every one that if this were really so, the system could not last. The driest economist would allow that it would not pay to let the working-classes be slaughtered. To work the labouring men of our West Indies to death might bring in a good return for a while, but could not be a profitable enterprise in the long run. Accordingly, this was the main, we had almost said the only, topic of the debates on slavery in 1831 and 1832. Is slavery causing a general massacre of the working classes in our sugar islands, or is it not? was a question worth debating, in the pounds, shillings, and pence view, as well as in the moral one. And debated it was, long and fiercely. The result was the full establishment of the dreadful fact. The slaves, as Mr Marryatt said, were "dying like rotten sheep."

Whatever, then, may be said for West Indian slavery, this damning thing must be said against it, that *the slaves were dying of it.* Then came emancipation. The tide at once turned. In the next twelve years, there was an *increase* of 54,076 in the number of the negroes of but ten colonies, (no return having been sent from the larger ones.) This one fact is enough by itself to justify emancipation. Whatever evils might have sprung from that act, nothing could be so bad for both master and men as to have all the latter killed

* Parl. Papers—Population Returns for the West Indies. Of course the decrease by manumission is not included.

off. Yet such was the limit towards which things were actually tending, and that swiftly. Had the same rate of decrease gone on, one century would have seen the extinction of slavery, by the extinction of the slaves. We put it to the good sense of our readers, whether it would have answered to let this state of things proceed.

We have shewn, then, how deep and how murderous was the wretchedness into which the working-classes of the West Indies was thrust by slavery. We have given some glimpses of the oppression they endured, and how they perished under it. So far, then, as the mass of the people went, it plainly was not only a good but a wise thing to cut their bonds. And, perhaps, now-a-days, it may seem strange that it should ever have been wished to keep such a state of things going, for the sake of a small body of gentlemen. But what made the matter wholly unbearable was, that it had not even the poor merit of enriching those for whose good the system was held to. Never did the truth come out with greater clearness than in the West Indies, that it is short-sighted folly to thrust aside natural arrangements, and set up artificial ones in their stead. Here was a body of men owning some of the richest land in the world. They had plenty of labourers, and might lash as much work out of them as they pleased. They had a tight monopoly, so tight that not even the sugar of England's other dominions of India or Singapore was allowed to compete. Yet, despite all this, even from the beginning of the century, the planters were continually laying before the Colonial Secretary and Parliament memorials which might truly be said to have been "written within and without, with lamentation and mourning and woe." Even in 1805, before the abolition of the African slave trade, the planters described their condition to be one of increasing embarrassment and impending ruin, as indeed it was.

If we reproduced these now forgotten complaints of the planters, they would seem worse bores than Cowper's friend, who

> "thought he should have died, he was so bad—
> His peevish hearers almost wish'd he had."

We will only therefore shew what the pecuniary condition of the planters was in 1830, when slavery and monopoly were at their zenith. Nor let it be said that their deep distress was owing to the anti-slavery agitation. They do not so much as allude to it.

Lord Chandos, in 1830, presented a petition from the West India merchants and planters, setting forth "the extreme distress under which they labour;" and he declared in his speech that it was "not possible for them to bear up against such a pressure any longer." . . . . "They are reduced to a state in which they are obliged earnestly to solicit relief from Parliament." Mr Bright said, "The distress of the West India colonial body is unparalleled in the country. Many families who formerly lived in comparative affluence are reduced to absolute penury." The *West India Reporter* also quotes a report on the commercial state of the West Indies, which said, "There are the strongest concurrent testimonies and proofs that, unless some speedy and efficient measures of relief are adopted, the ruin of a great number of the planters must inevitably very soon take place." Meanwhile, production was decreasing as well. Thus in the five years ending with 1820, the export of sugar from Jamaica had been 585,172 hogsheads; but had fallen to 493,784 in the five years ending with 1830,—a decrease of no less than 91,388 hogsheads. Nay, in the ten years ending with 1830, the decrease was no less than 201,843 hogsheads from the amount in the ten years ending with 1820.*

Another fact plainly shews that these distresses would only have grown deeper and heavier had slavery been allowed to go on. In the Dutch colony of Surinam, the very same ruin has come on, which befell our own islands. The fact that slavery was left standing has made not the least difference. Here we have a large colony, with slavery preserved in all its force and beauty. And what is the result? "Out of 917 plantations, 636 have been *totally abandoned!*" "Of the remainder, 65 grow nothing but wood or provisions." And the small balance are stated to be on the road to destruction.

The state of things, then, with which the statesmen of 1833 had to grapple was this:—A system kept going by the sheer force of the law, which allowed no rights whatever to some 800,000 serfs, which regarded them as beasts of burden, made for nothing but to enrich a few English families by their forced toil; which was slaughtering these workmen; which at the same time had brought down their owners to a state of "unparalleled" distress; had reduced these noblemen and gentlemen of England to the degrading necessity of "earnestly" begging Parliament for "relief;' and was

* Appendix. Bigelow's "Jamaica."

steadily diminishing the productive power of these fertile islands. Such was the result of the defiance that had been hurled at the laws of nature. Massacre of the working class; ruin of the proprietors; such was the work that slavery and monopoly were doing under the sun. And this is the state of things to which many eyes still look back with tender regrets! Yet Mr Carlyle himself, the chief hater of the philanthropists, with his wonted force, has told us that—

"To prosper in this world, to gain felicity, victory, and improvement, either for a man or a nation, there is but one thing requisite,—that the man or nation can discern what the true regulations of the universe are in regard to him and his pursuits, and can faithfully and steadily follow these. These will lead him to victory. Whoever it may be that sets him in the way of these . . . . . sets him in the sure way to please the Author of this universe, and is his friend of friends. And, again, whoever does the contrary is, for a like reason, his enemy of enemies. This may be taken as fixed."

Taken as fixed it certainly may be; and fixed it plainly was in the West Indies, where the artificial arbitrary interference of law with the natural freedom of man and freedom of trade, was bringing about the extinction of the working class, and was whirling their masters along to utter ruin.

[In the original Essay there follows, at this point, an investigation into the history of the West Indies during the calamitous period which ensued after the destruction of their monopoly in 1846; and which leads to the conclusion, that so rotten and ruinous was the state of affairs generated by slavery and monopoly together, that a collapse, sooner or later, was inevitable, and almost (as in Ireland) a great good, as clearing the ground for a happier order of things.*]

And now let us bid adieu to "the dreadful past." Those times, thank God, are clean gone for ever. Never again in the West Indies will the hand of man be chained, or his industry cramped, by the law of England. That wickedness, that folly, is dead: and the misery they caused, that, too, is over. The anguish of the slave, his cry of "Think me no man?" as his flesh was torn by the lash, is heard no more. His former owner, impoverished, broken-hearted, has passed away. The old order has given place to new. But here we come to the main question of all,—to the question, Was that crash of 1847 but a passing hurricane, or was it the beginning of an unchangeable doom? Are the West Indies ruined?

* My present limits compel me to omit this portion; but the whole Essay has been republished by Messrs Longman.

Was their knell sounded by the philanthropists and free-traders, who broke the slave's bonds, and stripped those islands of Protection? Is it true that the West Indies are, year by year, sinking deeper and deeper into barbarism and poverty, or has the groundwork been laid of a great and sound well-being?

But for the irresistible force of the official reports and statistics we shall bring forward, we might hardly dare to utter our reply. So little has the eye of this country been drawn to the West Indies since the time of their tribulation, that few are aware of what has been since going on; and the world does not dream but that, as their groans are no longer heard, they are silent in death. And yet, in truth, the West Indies are rising with great speed to a height of wealth, happiness, and comfort, unknown to them before. The two great experiments, the experiment of emancipation and the experiment of free trade, have been followed by a success which, for a while, was dashed with disappointment, but which, year by year, is growing more and more decisive. The application of sound principles, though it may have hastened a catastrophe which could not have been long delayed; though, as Mr Bigelow says, it "precipitated a result which was inevitable," yet now is bringing our sugar islands round to a state of true prosperity.

We have already remarked that, when the artificial compulsion which had concentrated almost the whole labouring force of the slave colonies on the one work of sugar-making, —when that artificial compulsion was taken away, there could not fail to be a redistribution of labour. We have pointed out that it was desirable, as well as inevitable, that a variety of work should take the place of that sameness. In fact, the free-trader condemns Protection on that very ground, (amongst others,) that it sets men to work at one kind of production, in lieu of those other kinds for which the soil and the climate would be more fit. We should not, therefore, have felt any disappointment had other occupations almost wholly displaced the production of the old staples. It would not have been the smallest proof that our islands were ruined. It might have come from a wiser and more profitable employment of labour. This, however, has not been the result. Strangely enough, freedom of labour and of trade have not lessened but have actually increased the production of sugar in our former slave colonies! In the last

two clear years of slavery, (1832 and 1833,) they exported to Great Britain, 8,471,744 cwt. In the two years 1856, 1857, they exported to Great Britain alone, 8,736,654 cwt.* And besides that, a large trade, altogether new, has sprung up with Australia, the United States, and other countries, of which we have no account.

And more striking still is the result, if we leave out the one island of Jamaica, where mismanagement and financial disorders (as we shall shew presently) have clogged her grievously. Passing by that one island, and taking into account the other sixteen, we find, that whereas, in the last six years of slavery, they exported on an average 3,007,782† cwt. of sugar, in the last four years, Great Britian alone has received from them 4,055,521 cwt., besides their new trade to foreign lands.

To this it may be objected that we include Mauritius, which had the advantage of a large importation of coolies, by whom the sugar is mainly produced. That is true. But it is to be borne in mind that the influx of free labour is exactly one of those advantages of which a land is debarred by slavery. It is a part of the curse of slavery that it repels the free man. When we are told that to judge of the effect of emancipation we must exclude those colonies that imported coolies, we reply at once that this useful importation has been one of the many blessings that freedom has brought in her train. But waiving this, and excluding the Mauritius as well as Jamaica, the remaining fifteen sugar islands produced in the three last years, (1855-6-7,) 7,427,618 cwt. against 7,405,849, in the last three years of slavery.

It is plain, then, that as regards seventeen out of the eighteen islands, more wealth is produced, even of that particular species which might have been expected to fall off.

It is so important to give a correct idea of the real ultimate effect of free labour and free trade upon our West Indies, that, at the risk of seeming tedious, we shall venture to give a series of extracts from the governors' reports, describing the state and prospects of each colony. But lest it should be thought that these extracts are carefully culled to produce a particular impression, and that if the reader had the whole reports before him he would find complaints and lamentations, we may at once say, that they appear to us to be fair samples

* *Sugar Return*, 1858.

† This average is given in "The State of the West Indies in 1855," a Colonial-Office document, not published, p. 19.

of the views entertained by the Governors, and also by other gentlemen acquainted with the West Indies. The language of complaint is no longer heard. Throughout these colonies hope and congratulation seem to have taken the place of irritation and despair.*

"*Antigua.*—Satisfactory evidence is afforded, by the revenue returns, of increase in trade and mercantile business, consequent upon the revival of agricultural prosperity."†

"*Bahamas.*—The rapidity with which these islands are advancing is indicated by the fact that the exports and imports rose from £201,497 in 1854, to £304,421 in 1855, an increase of £102,924 in one year. Twenty-three vessels were built in the colony in the year 1855.‡ The Governor refers, in 1851, to the 'great and important change for the better' in the condition of the people, which he mainly attributes to improved education."

"*Barbadoes.*—1853. 'Vast increase of trade.' 'So far the success of cultivation by free labour in Barbadoes is unquestionable.' 'In 1851 more sugar shipped from this island than in any one year since it has been peopled; and it is a remarkable fact that there will be more *labourers'* sugar made this year than previously.'"

"Sugar exported in 1842, 21,545 hogsheads; in 1852, 48,785; the 'increase being 27,240 hogsheads.'"

In 1858, "a great increase in the value of the exports." "The large proportion of land acquired by the labouring classes furnishes striking evidence of their industry."

Dominica.—1853. "The steady maintenance of production is full of promise as to the future."§ The exports shew a considerable increase under heads of sugar, rum, coffee, cocoa, oranges, fruits, hides, hard wood, and cotton. 1857. "Very considerable increase in revenue, and an equally marked improvement in the amount of imports." The Governor also dwells on the industry of the bulk of the population, and in the great amount of general comfort and independence among the labouring class, in which their industry has resulted.‖

"The native labourer, whose growing independence, manifested in the 'small patches of canes and little wooden mills here and there dotting

* We have always taken the last account we could find; but very often the Governors send reports full of local affairs, with no reference to the general state of the island. In all cases, the later the report the more gratifying it is found to be.

† Report, 1858. ‡ Ibid. 1856.

§ Report, 1854. ‖ Report, 1858.

the chequered plain around,' the significance of which was so pointedly alluded to in the last despatch of your Excellency's predecessor, has risen a step higher, and we now see him becoming the lessee of large sugar plantations regularly established, with all the usual appliances. As witness, for example, the lessee of Hope Vale Estate, containing 492 acres, with water mill and works complete; the lessee of Perseverance Estate, containing 522 acres, with steam engine and other apparatus complete; and the lessee of Mount Hardman, formerly a sugar estate, and lately a cattle farm, with 400 acres of pasture and wood, soon to be revived into its former state of flourishing luxuriance."

From *Grenada* we hear (1858) that "contentment appears to pervade all classes of the community. A proprietary body of considerable magnitude and importance has already risen from the labouring class. State of the finances most satisfactory,"—owing to augmentation in the imports. Some remarks on the want of labour, but the trade of the island rose in the last two years of which we have returns, (1851 and 1852,) from £205,282 to £293,696, an increase of £88,414.

In the *Times* of October 15, 1858, the Grenada Report is that "a greatly extended surface is covered by (sugar) cultivation." A considerable increase is noted in the exports of sugar, rum, and cocoa.

Guiana. — None of the West Indies have gone through a harder struggle. "The fall of prices in 1847 and 1848 was so sudden and so enormous as to have almost annihilated the colony at that crisis," writes the Governor in 1852; but he goes on to state, that now "the revenue is flourishing, population augmenting, education spreading, crime diminishing, and trade increasing."

Jamaica. — This island has suffered far more severely, and has progressed far more slowly than any other. Sir Henry Barkly, the ablest Governor she has had, attributes this depression mainly to the glaring defects of her system of government; and Sir Charles Grey speaks of it in the same terms. "There is," he says, "no system or consistency whatever in the conduct of the financial affairs of the colony, nor any recognised organ of government or legislature which has the power to bring about effective improvements." Some useful changes, however, have lately been made, and a decided improvement is shewing itself in the exports and imports of the colony.

Montserrat. — After referring to "the improved and improving state of the community, as allowed on all hands," and giving various details, the Governor says, (in 1853,) "So much for the increase of confidence, enterprise, and industry

in Montserrat. No island in these seas exhibits a more decisive tendency to social and moral regeneration and improvement. The rural population are quiet, contented, and orderly. Their condition one of great comfort." A new system of taxation (as we understand, throwing it off imports upon real property) came into operation in June 1856, and with such strong and powerful effect, that the imports more than doubled in value in the course of the year!

Nevis.—The case of this island is peculiarly interesting, because in it an experiment has been tried in taxation, which may perhaps some day become generally adopted throughout the world. Things in Nevis had got to such a desperate state—they were, in fact, past all bearing—that at last Mr President Seymour, a gentleman of remarkable boldness and vigour, induced the legislature to consent to a radical change in the fiscal system. The import duties were totally abolished: and a tax of 20 per cent placed on rentals.

Small as the field was in which this experiment was tried, its astonishing results are worth noting by statesmen. The new system came into play, March 1856. In that year the imports rose from £19,728 to £34,449. New shops were speedily opened. House-rent rose threefold. The sound of the hammer was heard, and the smell of fresh paint experienced, where all had been crumbling decay. "The roads appear as if the greater part of the population had new clothed themselves, and in the harbour, so often deserted, I now count ten ships of considerable burden." *

St Kitts.—"A larger quantity of sugar is produced now than in the time of slavery," † (though on a smaller area.) "The agricultural prospects of the island are most encouraging. Its financial condition continues satisfactory; so do the education returns. The whole trade increased from £246,536, in 1856, to £352,769, in 1857—an increase of £106,233 in one year! Attendance in schools steadily increasing; ‡ crime steadily diminishing." §

St Lucia.—"At no period in her history was there a greater breadth of land under sugar cultivation than at the present moment." ‖ The education returns are "on the whole ex-

* Report, 1857. President Rumbold, who succeeded President Seymour, disapproved of the change, on account of the greater difficulty of raising revenue by direct taxation. He says, however, that "there appears now to be at work an industrious spirit of improvement: cultivation appears to be carefully attended to. . . . . There is ample room to hope for the gradual regeneration of the colony."

† Report, 1856. ‡ Ibid. 1858.

§ Ibid. 1856. ‖ Ibid. 1853.

tremely satisfactory." There seems to the Governor to be "an increasing desire on the part of a very respectable* portion of the inhabitants to avail themselves of the schools." In 1857, the administrator notes the extension of cane cultivation;† and says that "the aspect of the country is more promising: the prospects of the agriculturist are encouraging."

Sugar exported from 1838–1842, 4,588,475 lbs.; and from 1852–1856, 6,392,093 lbs.; the increase being 1,803,618 lbs.

St Vincent.—In 1852 the Governor described the financial management as "inexcusable." In 1856 important reforms were made. The result is, that, in 1857, he says, "it is matter of great satisfaction to me to state that . . . . the foundation has been laid for a great and progressive improvement." He speaks of extended cultivation, and of "a really sound and healthy state of the colony at present, and a cheering and promising prospect for the future." He says the condition of the labourer is almost universally one of comfort; and describes the rising villages, the growing number of freeholders and leaseholders, and the steady progressive increase in the value of imports.‡ In 1858 he describes the colony as in a "most satisfactory state." "Agricultural operations largely extended;" his anticipation of its continued progress and prosperity had been fully realised. Imports and exports had increased from £249,526 in 1856, to £406,159 in 1857; an increase of £156,633 in one year.§ And he expressly attributes it to "increased cultivation and prosperity." He says, "the cheerful prospects of 1856 are being fully realised. The present position of St Vincent is most satisfactory, and its future most promising."

In *Tobago*, again, the accounts were dismal, in 1852 and 1853, which the Governor said was beyond doubt owing to the state of its financial affairs. In 1856, however, an improved system having been adopted, the result is, that already the Governor "has much satisfaction in taking a more encouraging view of the prospects of the colony."‖ A marked improvement is visible in the revenue returns. The labourers are described as well behaved and industrious.¶

Tortola under slavery exported 15,559 cwt. of sugar. It now exports none at all. But the change is wholly an advantage. The island is singularly suitable for the raising of

* In the sense of a very large portion. † Report, 1852.
‡ Ibid. 1857. § Ibid. 1858. ‖ Ibid. 1858. ¶ Ibid.

stock, and accordingly "all the people, with few exceptions, are owners of cattle, which they dispose of to great advantage."

"It is very gratifying to be able to observe that the labouring population appear fully sensible of the advantages of education to their children, and that the latter manifest a great desire to benefit by the opportunity afforded them."

Trinidad is highly flourishing. The whole trade has increased from a yearly average under slavery, of £810,636, to £1,239,241 in 1856, an increase of £428,605. In 1852 the crop was the largest ever shipped from the island; and it has been extending since, — "marked improvement in the cultivation of the sugar estates."* Export of sugar rose from an average of 310,797 cwt. under slavery, to one of 426,042 in the seven years ending 1854.

These specific accounts of the several islands are borne out by the statistics and reports that relate to our West Indies *en masse*. To men of business one fact will seem almost enough by itself to shew their sound commercial state, namely, that in the year 1857 the Colonial Bank received bills from the West Indies to the amount of more than £1,300,000, and less than £8000 were returned.† Nor was there a single failure in the West India trade during the severe commercial crisis in the autumn of that year. Furthermore, coffee, cotton, wool, sugar, rum, cocoa, are all exported in increasing quantities. The total exports from Great Britain to the West Indies in 1857 were valued at half-a-million more than the average of the preceding ten years, and actually in that year equalled her exports to Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Greece, Azores, Madeira, and Morocco, all combined.‡ The exports and imports together of the West Indies amounted, in the four years ending with 1853, to just £32,500,000; and in the four years ending with 1857, to just £37,000,000, an increase of £4,500,000 in four years. In the year 1847, the total trade, to and fro, of those islands was valued at £10,735,000, and (as noted above) the value of the sugar alone imported from them into the United Kingdom, in that year, was no less than £5,618,000!

These official statistics and reports absolutely demonstrate the fact that the West Indies are rapidly advancing in wealth and prosperity; nor must it be supposed that they are merely

* Report, 1853. † See Report of Colonial Bank, for June 30, 1857.
‡ Trade and Navigation Accounts, 1858.

"putting money in their purse," without a corresponding advance in the general character of the people. In this respect the change from the old state of things is described on all hands as being most gratifying;* and especially in those thousands of cases where the negroes have built altogether new villages for themselves. The cottages are either neatly thatched, or shingled with pieces of hard wood. Some are built of stone or wood; but generally are plastered also on the outside, and whitewashed. Many are ornamented with a portico in front, to screen the sitting apartment from sun and rain; while for the admission of light and air, as well as to add to their appearance, they exhibit either shutters or jalousies, painted green, or small glass windows.

"There is usually a sleeping apartment at each end and a sitting-room in the centre. The floors are in most instances terraced, although boarded ones for sleeping-rooms are becoming common. Many of the latter contain good mahogany bedsteads, a washing-stand, a looking-glass, and chairs. The middle apartment is usually furnished with a sideboard, displaying sundry articles of crockery ware, some decent-looking chairs, and not unfrequently with a few broadsheets of the Tract Society hung round the walls in neat frames of cedar. For cooking food, and other domestic purposes, a little room or two is erected at the back of the cottage, where are also arranged the various conveniences for keeping domestic stock. The villages are laid out in regular order, being divided into lots more or less intersected by roads or streets. The plots are usually in the form of an oblong square. The cottage is situated at an equal distance from each side of the allotment, and at about eight or ten feet from the public thoroughfare. The piece of ground in front is, in some instances, cultivated in the style of a European garden, displaying rose-bushes, and other flowering shrubs, among the choicer vegetable productions; while the remainder is covered with all the substantial vegetables and fruits of the country heterogeneously intermixed."

The result is, that they present "a very pleasing appearance." Sir Henry Barkly was reminded by those in the hills of the villages in Switzerland, and he says they have a decided air of progresive civilisation and comfort about them; and that it is quite clear, whatever may be the case elsewhere, that their inhabitants are not retrograding either in their moral or physical condition. And the same despatch contains a report by a stipendiary magistrate, and speaks of "the thousands of well cultivated settlements, with their tastefully arranged cottages and gardens, which have given quite a different appearance to the country since August 1838, and bespeak the prosperity and comfort of the occupants, and

* See "Antigua and the Antiguans;" Philippo's "Jamaica," &c. &c.; Sir H. Barkly's Journal, in 1853, (P. P.) Despatch, May, 1854.

present a cheering prospect, and an encouraging hope for future."* Another magistrate reports to him that the vancement in the condition of the labouring class is unm takably apparent:—

"The peasantry, who were formerly unused to domestic comfort a a state of independence, are now otherwise circumstanced. A very la number of them are owners of freehold properties, on which they a comfortably located. They also own a large number of horses, hogs, a other live stock. They trade extensively in the native products of t parish, which they cultivate in such abundance, that boats are co stantly conveying cargoes of yams, cocoas, and plantains to the port Falmouth in the parish of Trelawney, where they are scarce, and i great demand. The vessels employed in this traffic are almost exclu sively their own property. The degrading practice of concubinage ha been forsaken by a large number, who have embraced the marriag state, and the weekly publication of intended matrimonial alliances i proof that matrimony among them is on the increase. They contribut more largely than any other class to the general taxation of the parish and not a few enjoy and exercise electoral rights. Generally they ma be said to be a fair specimen of the labouring people of this island; willing and tractable, civil and obedient, confiding in those who employ them, often toiling on estates for weeks and months in expectation of reward, but in many instances ill-requited for their confidence and labour by disappointment and non-payment."

The number of such settlements established since emancipation is almost incredible. Within eight years of that event, nearly two hundred villages of the kind we have been describing, had been built, and full 100,000 acres of land purchased, by the negroes of Jamaica alone. A statement was read in the House of Commons, in 1842, by Lord Stanley (then Colonial Minister,) that "it would appear wonderful how so much had been accomplished in the island, in building, planting, digging, and making fences. The number of freeholders *who have become freeholders by their accumulation and industry* in the island of Jamaica amounted, in 1840, to 7,340."

It is usual to fancy that the free negroes desert the estates to squat upon wild lands; but although this has occasionally been the case, by far the greater number of them have bought land, and that at a good price, for their settlements. And the negro proprietor is just as proud of his own home and freehold as any Englishman might be. The names they give them may be taken as a slight indication of their feelings: "Content my own," "Comfort Castle," "Happy Hut," "Thank God to see it," and so forth. One is mentioned by the Rev. Mr Philippo, as being entitled "Occasion call,"

* Sir H. Barkly, 1854. Appendix.

which the owner explained thus: "If any person have business wid me, him can come in; but if him don't want me in pottickler, me no wants him company, and him no 'casion to come."

In appearance, very many of the negroes have by no means a disagreeable exterior. In fact the clever authoress of "Antigua and the Antiguans" declares that many of the creole* negroes may be termed very good-looking. High and well-formed foreheads, black and sparkling eyes, aquiline noses, and lips with only a slight pout, are not uncommon, though others of the same race are more like apes than human beings. Both men and women, she tells us, are seldom to be seen except in the most becoming attire; the dress of the women generally consisting of a printed or cotton gown, with a white handkerchief tied round their heads like a turban, and a neat straw hat trimmed with white ribband. But on high days and festivals, it must be owned that the splendour of the negro array is not in the purest taste. One of the writers on the West Indies was shocked by seeing a negress who actually was adorned with pink stockings, yellow shoes, and a bonnet of green trimmed with pink, and displaying a blue rose with silver leaves! Silks, satins, muslins, and crapes are plentifully used, and even the "gentlemen" will come out on occasion in a truly glorious costume; with velvet collars, radiant waistcoats, and boots expressly made to "stamp and creak" well. They all carry umbrellas, silk if possible; and pocket-handkerchiefs, with one end making its appearance from the coat pocket. We are told, however, that the love for gaudy colours is disappearing; and that modesty and sensibility are becoming increasingly apparent in the female sex. In their names, the march of intellect has extinguished the Sambos, Pompeys, and Darkeys of former days, and now the shining pickaninnies rejoice in the appellations of "Adeline Floretta," "Rosalind Monemia," "Alonzo Frederick," and so forth. One cannot but smile at these little affectations; but all this shews a progress towards refinement and civilisation, though some of its offshoots are laughable. The same may be said of their manners, in which a surprising improvement has taken place. "The uncouth address and sullen aspect and carriage of the slaves" have been replaced by a great deal of graceful kindliness and ease towards strangers, and a politeness and respect to each other

* *i. e.*, Native: not imported from Africa.

which may often approach extravagance, but is much better than the rough address so common in many parts of England among the working classes. No negro peasant meets another without exchanging salutations and inquiries. Age is particularly venerated, and the noisy little negroes at their sport will stop while one of their old people are passing, with, "How dy'e ma'm," and "How dy'e me picnee," is the courteous reply. Every one praises their generosity and kindness. To the miserable pauper whites, who abound in some of the West Indies (and whose squalor and feebleness shew the wisdom of Carlyle's expectation that the West Indies will some day be saved by a population of "true splinters of the old Harz rock, heroic white men, worthy to be called old Saxons") they are often known to act the part of guardian angels. They will work for them, feed them, clothe them, without the slightest wish or prospect of receiving remuneration.

They are rising, too, with rapidity in the social scale, and would seem to be fit for any kind of employment. Mr Baird mentions that in the legislatures of many of the islands there are already sundry negro members, as well as many gentlemen of colour. When Mr Bigelow visited Jamaica, there were ten or a dozen coloured men in the Legislative Assembly, which consists altogether of about fifty members; and the police force, the officers of the penitentiary, the officers of the courts of justice, as well as some of the barristers, were coloured men; and we believe they have since been freely admitted to the magistracy and to political office. The old prejudices against African blood is disappearing, though under slavery it was intensely strong; so much so, that the coloured people were generally not allowed to be buried in the same churchyard with the whites. Nay, at St John's, in Antigua, the church bell was not allowed to be profaned by tolling for the demise of these degraded people, and a smaller one was actually provided for that purpose!

Year by year, too, education is making way; and though in some districts it is complained that the negroes do not shew eagerness to obtain schooling for their children, from others very satisfactory reports are sent; and the governors, almost without exception, state that crime is diminishing in the islands. In fact, crime of an atrocious character is very rare indeed. The negroes are guilty of a great deal of petty pilfering, and they are also regardless of truth; but, happily,

drunkenness is not one of their prevailing faults; nor are they given to deeds of violence, or of deliberate villany. They are a merry, light-hearted, and kindly people; somewhat shallow and thoughtless, and with the faults that come of that character; but docile, orderly, and peaceable.

We must now conclude. The two main conclusions which are enforced upon us by our investigation are these. The one, that slavery and monopoly were bearing the West Indies to ruin. The other, that under free labour and free trade they are rising to wealth. Under slavery and monopoly, the labouring class was miserable and was perishing miserably. Under slavery and monopoly, the owners of the soil were reduced to the greatest pitch of distress. The state of affairs which had arisen under this old dispensation had rendered a crash some day inevitable. But when once that blow had fallen, and the old things had passed away, and the new things had come, then the inherent virtue of the principle of freedom became manifest; and it is now working out the most beneficent, the most astonishing—what a few years ago would have seemed the most incredible results. Wisdom has been justified of her children. Seeking only to do the thing that was right and noble,—seeking not to please herself, but to do justice,—England set free her slaves. It is plain that but for that measure, her colonies would have sunk to irretrievable destruction. It proves now that by that measure she has set them on the way to happiness and prosperity; that not only are the former slaves enjoying a degree of comfort and independence almost unparalleled, but that our own trade with these islands is becoming of higher and higher value. They are yearly enriching us more and more with the wealth of their fertile soil. Instead of being the plague of statesmen, the disgrace of England, they are becoming invaluable possessions to the British Crown. Never did any deed of any nation shew more signally that to do right is the truest prudence, than the great deed of emancipation.

> "Not once or twice, in our rough island story,
> The path of duty was the way to glory."

And in her dealings with the negro race, both in the West Indies and in Africa, England having "only thirsted for the right," has already begun to find the wisdom of that course. The fight for freedom has been fought amid great discouragements; for a time there were heart-breaking drawbacks to the success attained. But it has been fought with a good

courage. And now the spread of commerce and civilisation in West Africa; the happiness of the West Indian peasantry; the improving agriculture, the extending trade of the islands; the cheering news which governor after governor sending home of their thriving state, — such is the reward to herself, as well as to them, which England is reaping, from a generous, self-denying, Christian policy.

LIFE

OF

SIR THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON, BART.

CHAPTER I.

1786–1802.

THE family from which Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton was descended, resided, about the middle of the sixteenth century, at Sudbury, in Suffolk, and subsequently at Coggeshall, in Essex. At the latter place, William Buxton, his lineal ancestor, died in 1624. Thomas, the son of William Buxton, claimed and received from the Heralds' College, in 1634, the arms borne by the family of the same name settled before 1478 at Tybenham, in Norfolk, and now represented by Sir Robert Jacob Buxton, Bart.

Isaac Buxton, a merchant, and the fifth in direct descent from William, married Sarah Fowell, an heiress; connected with the family of the Fowells, of Fowelscombe, in Devonshire. From her was derived the name of Fowell, first borne by her eldest son, who married Anna, daughter of Osgood Hanbury, Esq., of Holfield Grange, in Essex. The first Thomas Fowell Buxton lived at Earl's Colne, in the same county, but was residing at Castle Hedingham when his eldest son, Thomas Fowell, the subject of this memoir, was born, on the 1st of April 1786.

Mr Buxton was a man of a gentle and kindly disposition, devoted to field sports, and highly popular in his neighbour-

hood, where he exercised hospitality on a liberal scale. Having been appointed High Sheriff of the county, he availed himself of the authority of his office to relieve the miseries of the prisoners under his superintendence, visiting them sedulously, notwithstanding the prevalence of the jail fever. He died at Earl's Colne, in 1792, leaving his widow with three sons and two daughters.

The eldest boy, Thomas Fowell, was at this time six years old. He was a vigorous child, and early shewed a bold and determined character. As an instance of this it may be mentioned, that when quite a child, while walking with his uncle, Mr Hanbury, he was desired to give a message to a pig-driver who had passed along the road. He set off in pursuit; and although one of his shoes was soon lost in the mud, he pushed on through lonely and intricate lanes, tracking the driver by the footmarks of his pigs, for nearly three miles, into the town of Coggeshall; nor did he stop until he had overtaken the man, and delivered his message.

One who knew the boy well in his early days said of him, "He never was a child; he was a man when in petticoats." At the age of only four years and a-half, he was sent to a school at Kingston, where he suffered severely from ill-treatment; and his health giving way (chiefly from the want of sufficient food), he was removed, shortly after his father's death, to the school of Dr Charles Burney, at Greenwich, where his brothers afterwards joined him. Here he had none of the hardships to endure, to which he had been subjected at Kingston, and he found in Dr Burney a kind and judicious master. Upon one occasion, he was accused by an usher of talking during school time, and desired to learn the collect, epistle, and gospel, as a punishment. When Dr Burney entered the school, young Buxton appealed to him, stoutly denying the charge. The usher as strongly asserted it; but Dr Burney stopped him, saying, "I never found the boy tell a lie, and will not disbelieve him now."

He does not appear to have made much progress in his studies, and his holidays spent at Earl's Colne, where his mother continued to reside, left a deeper trace in his after-life, than the time spent at school. Mrs Buxton's character

has been thus briefly described by her son: "My mother was a woman of a very vigorous mind, and possessing many of the generous virtues in a very high degree. She was large-minded about everything; disinterested almost to an excess; careless of difficulty, labour, danger, or expense, in the prosecution of any great object. She had a masculine understanding, great power of mind, great vigour, and was very fearless. With these nobler qualities were united some of the imperfections, which belong to that species of ardent and resolute character." She belonged to the Society of Friends. Her husband being a member of the Church of England, their sons were baptized in infancy; nor did she ever exert her influence to bring them over to her own persuasion. She was more anxious to give them a deep regard for the Holy Scriptures, and a lofty moral standard, than to quicken their zeal about the distinctive differences of religious opinion. Her system of education had in it some striking features. There was little indulgence, but much liberty. The boys were free to go where they would, and do what they pleased, and her eldest son especially was allowed to assume almost the position of master in the house. But, on the other hand, her authority, when exercised, was paramount over him, as over his brothers and sisters. On being asked by the mother of a large and ill-managed family, whether the revolutionary principles of the day were not making way among her boys, her reply was, "I know nothing about revolutionary principles: my rule is that imposed on the people of Boston,—'implicit obedience, unconditional submission.'" Yet the character of her son Fowell was not without some strong touches of wilfulness. He has described himself, in more than one of his papers, as having been in his boyhood "of a daring, violent, domineering temper." When this was remarked to his mother, "Never mind," she would say; "he is self-willed now—you will see it turn out well in the end."

Her aim appears to have been, to give her boys a manly and robust character; and, both by precept and example, she strove to render them self-denying, and, at the same time, thoughtful for others. Long afterwards, when actively occupied in London, her son wrote to her:—"I constantly feel, especially in action and exertion for others, the effects

of principles early planted by you in my mind." He particularly alluded to the abhorrence of slavery and the slave trade, with which she had imbued him.

His size and strength well fitted him for country amusements; and he early acquired a strong taste for hunting, shooting, and fishing, under the auspices of the gamekeeper, Abraham Plastow. This gamekeeper was one of those characters occasionally to be met with in the country, uniting straightforward honest simplicity with great shrewdness and humour. He was well fitted to train his three young masters in those habits of fearlessness and hardihood, which their mother wished them to possess. His influence over them is thus described by Mr Buxton, in the following letter:—

"My father died when I was very young, and I became at ten years old almost as much the master of the family as I am of this family at the present moment. My mother, a woman of great talents and great energy, perpetually inculcated on my brothers and sisters that they were to obey me, and I was rather encouraged to play the little tyrant. She treated me as an equal, conversed with me, and led me to form and express my opinions without reserve. This system had obvious and great disadvantages, but it was followed by some few incidental benefits. Throughout life I have acted and thought for myself; and to this kind of habitual decision I am indebted for all the success I have met with.

"My 'guide, philosopher, and friend,' was Abraham Plastow, the gamekeeper; a man for whom I have ever felt, and still feel, very great affection. He was a singular character: in the first place, this tutor of mine could neither read nor write, but his memory was stored with various rustic knowledge. He had more of natural good sense, and what is called mother-wit, than almost any person I have met with since: a knack which he had of putting everything into new and singular lights made him, and still makes him, a most entertaining, and even intellectual companion. He was the most undaunted of men: I remember my youthful admiration of his exploits on horseback. For a time he hunted my uncle's hounds, and his fearlessness was proverbial. But what made him particularly valuable, were his principles of integrity and honour. He never said or did a thing in the absence of my mother of which she would have disapproved. He always held up the highest standard of integrity, and filled our youthful minds with sentiments as pure and as generous as could be found in the writings of Seneca or Cicero. Such was my first instructor, and, I must add, my best; for I think I have profited more by the recollection of his remarks and admonition, than by the more learned and elaborate discourses of all my other tutors. He was our playfellow and tutor; he rode with us, fished with us, shot with us, upon all occasions."

One among many anecdotes remembered of this man,

may be recorded. The young Buxtons had been sent out hunting, and, as usual, under Abraham's care. As they were approaching the scene of sport, Fowell made use of an improper expression, upon which the gamekeeper insisted upon his returning home at once, and carried his point.

Occasionally the holidays were passed by the children with their grandmother, either in London or at Bellfield, her country-house, near Weymouth. The formality of her life in town was rather unpalatable to them: even the exceptions to her rules were methodically arranged; her Sunday discipline, for example, was very strict, but on one (and only one) Sunday in the year, she gave the children the treat of a drive in the park. A visit to Bellfield was more attractive, and there young Buxton spent many of the happiest hours of his boyhood. The house, which, at the death of his grandmother, became his own, (though till lately inhabited by his uncle Mr Charles Buxton,) is beautifully situated, commanding fine views of Weymouth Bay and the Island of Portland. To this spot he ever continued much attached, and his letters from thence always mention his great enjoyment of its beauties.

Weymouth was at this period the favourite resort of George III., and the King and royal family frequently visited Mrs Buxton. Her grandchildren always retained a vivid impression of the cordial kindness of their royal guests.

At the age of fifteen, after spending eight years at Dr Burney's, without making any great advances in learning, he persuaded his mother to allow him to reside at home; and there he remained for many months, devoting the chief part of his time to sporting, and the remainder to desultory reading. It was indeed a critical time for his character; but the germ of nobler qualities lay below; a genial influence was alone wanting to develop it; and through the kindness of Providence, as he used emphatically to acknowledge, that influence was at hand. Before this period he had become acquainted with John, the eldest son of Mr John Gurney, of Earlham Hall, near Norwich, with whose family his own was distantly connected, and, in the autumn of 1801, he paid his friend a visit at his father's house.

Mr Gurney had for several years been a widower. His

family consisted of eleven children; three elder daughters, on the eldest of whom the charge of the rest chiefly devolved, the son whom we have mentioned, a group of four girls nearer Fowell Buxton's age, and three younger boys. He was then in his sixteenth year, and was charmed by the lively and kindly spirit which pervaded the whole party, while he was surprised at finding them all, even the younger portion of the family, zealously occupied in self-education, and full of energy in every pursuit, whether of amusement or of knowledge. They received him as one of themselves, early appreciating his masterly, though still uncultivated mind; while on his side, their cordial and encouraging welcome seemed to draw out all his latent powers. He at once joined with them in reading and study, and from this visit may be dated a remarkable change in the whole tone of his character: he received a stimulus, not merely in the acquisition of knowledge, but in the formation of studious habits and intellectual tastes; nor could the same influence fail of extending to the refinement of his disposition and manners.

Earlham itself possessed singular charms for their young and lively party. They are described at the time of his visit as spending the fine autumn afternoons in sketching and reading under the old trees in the park, or in taking excursions, some on foot, some on horseback, into the country round; wandering homeward towards evening, with their drawings and the wild flowers they had found. The roomy old hall, also, was well fitted for the cheerful, though simple hospitalities which Mr Gurney delighted to exercise, especially towards the literary society, for which Norwich was at that time distinguished.

A characteristic anecdote of Mr Gurney has been recorded. He was a strict preserver of his game, and accordingly had an intense repugnance to everything bordering on poaching. Upon one occasion, when walking in his park, he heard a shot fired in a neighbouring wood—he hurried to the spot, and his naturally placid temper was considerably ruffled on seeing a young officer with a pheasant at his feet, deliberately reloading his gun. As the young man, however, replied to his rather warm expressions by a polite apology, Mr Gurney's wrath was somewhat allayed; but he

could not refrain from asking the intruder what *he* would do, if he caught a man trespassing on his premises. "I would ask him in to luncheon," was the reply. The serenity of this impudence was not to be resisted. Mr Gurney not only invited him to luncheon, but supplied him with dogs and a gamekeeper, and secured him excellent sport for the remainder of the day.

Mr Gurney belonged to the Society of Friends; but his family was not brought up with any strict regard to its peculiarities. He put little restraint on their domestic amusements; and music and dancing were among their favourite recreations. The third daughter, afterwards the well-known Mrs Fry, had indeed united herself more closely to the Society of Friends; but her example in this respect had not as yet been followed by any of her brothers or sisters.

Such was the family of which Fowell Buxton might be said to have become a member, at this turning point of his life. The following letter was written to his mother during his visit to Earlham:—

EARLHAM, *October* 1801.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—I was very much pleased with all your last, excepting that part in which you mention the (to me at least) hateful subject of St Andrews. *

"It gives me pain to write, because it will you to read, that my aversion is, ever was, and ever will be invincible; nevertheless, if you command, I will obey. You will exclaim, 'How ungrateful, after all the pleasure he has had.' Pleasure, great pleasure, I certainly have had, but not sufficient to counterbalance the unhappiness the pursuance of your plan would occasion me; but, as I said before, I will obey.

"If you think fit, I shall return to Cromer on Wednesday. Northrepps is perfectly delightful. I have dined many times with Mr Pym: a letter he has received from his brother in Ireland says, 'Nothing but speculation, peculation, and paper, exist in this unhappy country.' I am going to Lord Wodehouse's this morning, and to a ball at Mr Kett's at night."

In December 1801 he returned to Earl's Colne; but his mind never lost the impulse which it had received during his stay at Earlham. Many years afterwards he thus refers to this early friendship, which he places first in an enumeration of the blessings of his life:—

* His mother had proposed to send him to the College at St Andrews.

"I know no blessing of a temporal nature (and it is not only temporal) for which I ought to render so many thanks as my connexion with the Earlham family. It has given a colour to my life. Its influence was most positive and pregnant with good, at that critical period between school and manhood. They were eager for improvement—I caught the infection. I was resolved to please them, and in the College of Dublin, at a distance from all my friends, and all control, their influence, and the desire to please them, kept me hard at my books, and sweetened the toil they gave. The distinctions I gained at College, (little valuable as distinctions, but valuable, because habits of industry, perseverance, and reflection, were necessary to obtain them,) these boyish distinctions were exclusively the result of the animating passion in my mind, to carry back to them the prizes which they prompted and enabled me to win."

CHAPTER II.

1802—1807.

As there were reasons for expecting that her son would inherit considerable property in Ireland, Mrs Buxton deemed it advisable that he should complete his education at Dublin; and, accordingly, in the winter of 1802 he was placed in the family of Mr Moore of Donnybrook, who prepared pupils for the University. It was shortly before the Christmas holidays that he took up his abode at Donnybrook, and he then found himself inferior to every one of his companions in classical acquirements; but he spent the vacation in such close study, that on the return of the other pupils, he stood as the first among them.

Late in life he thus recalls this period in a letter to one of his sons, then under the roof of a private tutor:—

"You are now at that period of life, in which you must make a turn to the right or to the left. You must now give proofs of principle, determination, and strength of mind,—or you must sink into idleness, and acquire the habits and character of a desultory, ineffective young man; and if once you fall to that point, you will find it no easy matter to rise again.

"I am sure that a young man may be very much what he pleases. In my own case it was so. I left school, where I had learnt little or nothing, at about the age of fourteen. I spent the next year at home, learning to hunt and shoot. Then it was, that the prospect of going to College opened upon me, and such thoughts as I have expressed in this letter occurred to my mind. I made my resolutions, and I acted up to them: I gave up all desultory reading—I

never looked into a novel or a newspaper—I gave up shooting. During the five years I was in Ireland, I had the liberty of going when I pleased to a capital shooting place. I never went but twice. In short, I considered every hour as precious, and I made everything bend to my determination not to be behind any of my companions, —and thus I speedily passed from one species of character to another. I had been a boy fond of pleasure and idleness, reading only books of unprofitable entertainment—I became speedily a youth of steady habits of application, and irresistible resolution. I soon gained the ground I had lost, and I found those things which were difficult and almost impossible to my idleness, easy enough to my industry; and much of my happiness and all my prosperity in life have resulted from the change I made at your age. It all rests with yourself. If you seriously resolve to be energetic and industrious, depend upon it you will for your whole life have reason to rejoice that you were wise enough to form and to act upon that determination."

During his stay at this place, the country was disturbed by the breaking out of the "Kilwarden rebellion," instigated by the unfortunate Robert Emmett. To meet the danger, volunteer corps were hastily organised, one of which Mr Buxton joined as a lieutenant. The current reports of the day are thus sketched by him in his letters to his mother:—

"Everybody abuses the Lord Lieutenant. He received information from all parts of the kingdom that the rising was to take place on Saturday night, and all the preparation he made was to send 2500 men to take care of his house and family at the Park. The soldiers in Dublin had no ammunition. Colonel Littlehales, Mr Marsden, and every officer of the Castle, were away from their posts; and for two hours after the rising began, and while the rebels were murdering Lord Kilwarden, Colonel Brown, and all the soldiers they could catch, nothing was done by government.

"After the first alarm, however, had subsided, the soldiers collected in small parties, and the rebels were soon put to the rout; before morning, 10,000 pikes were taken, all the prisons in Dublin were filled with rebels, and from 200 to 300 are supposed to have been killed. Isaac and I watched last night at Donnybrook, with our pistols loaded, for it was expected that they would attack the outskirts. However, they did not come. A great many Lucan people were found dead in Dublin. Every noted rebel was seen going to Dublin on Saturday evening. The gardener and workmen say there were 500 rebels at Mr North's gate that night. Only two mails came into Dublin on Sunday—one was stopped at Lucan and another at Maynooth."

After remaining a year at Donnybrook, he paid another visit to Earlham. "We are most completely happy here," he writes to his mother; "everything goes on well, and you need not fear that I am losing my time, for being with

the Gurneys makes me ten times more industrious than anything else would."

In October 1803, he returned to Dublin, and entered Trinity College as a fellow-commoner. He at once commenced his studies with great vigour, and in his first examination obtained the second place. This success appears to have surpassed his expectations, and he thus writes to his sister:—Feb. 24, 1804, "I suppose you know how the examinations have ended—very much indeed to my satisfaction, and I am now reading away for the next. My mother is in ecstasies about my being so near getting the premium." And in a letter to his mother he tells her, he is resolutely bent on getting it next time. He succeeded, and this being his first triumph, he was not a little elated; and he mentions as "an exceeding addition to the pleasure," that he was the first Englishman, as far as he could ascertain, who had gained a premium at the Dublin University.

Before the autumnal examination, he writes to Mr J. J. Gurney, who was then reading with a private tutor at Oxford:—

"COLLEGE, DUBLIN, *September* 9, 1804.

"Your suppositions about my getting a certificate are, I am afraid, very unlikely to be realised. My antagonists are very tremendous. In the first place, there are North and Montgomery. I hardly know which of them I ought to dread the most; they are both excellent scholars, and men of the most unwearied application: next Wybrants and Arthur, both of whom I have had the pleasure of beating already. So far for college business; I only wish you were here to beat everybody."

In a postscript to this very letter he mentions with boyish glee his having gained the certificate in question. A close friendship soon afterwards sprang up between Mr Buxton and Mr John Henry North, one of the "tremendous antagonists" to whom he refers; and who afterwards distinguished himself both at the Irish Bar, and in the House of Commons.

Whenever Mr Buxton could escape from Dublin, he visited Earlham, and an attachment, which he dated from the first day they met, gradually ripened, between him and Hannah, fifth daughter of Mr Gurney; till in March 1805, they were engaged to be married.

But while in this direction a bright prospect opened before him, in another, the clouds appeared to be gathering about his path. Other claimants had come forward to contest his right to the Irish property; his mother had undertaken an expensive lawsuit regarding it, and her hopes of success were already growing dim. At the same time the family property had been materially diminished, by some unsuccessful speculations in which she had engaged.

Her son's letters, however, (addressed for the most part to Earlham,) bear little trace of anxiety:—

"*April* 1805.

"The examinations are over, but, alas, I cannot describe the disasters that have befallen me. Think how disagreeable a circumstance it must be to me to have all my hopes disappointed, to lose the certificate, to have my gold medal stopped, and, what is worse, to know that my Earlham visit, as it was the cause of my idleness, was the cause of my disgrace. Think of all this, and fetch a *very, very* deep sigh,—and look very grave, and then think how happy I must be to have to tell YOU, that my utmost examinationary hopes are realised,—that I have the certificate and 'Valde bene in omnibus,' and, what is better, that I can ascribe my success *to nothing but my Earlham visit!* . . . . I am sure that, if I had not thought that I was partly working for you, I never should have been able to read so much during this month. The examiner told five of my opponents that he was sorry he had not a premium for each of them. I was not 'cut up' (as the College phrase is) during the whole examination, and if I have been the trumpeter of my own praise a little too much, you must remember that one slight word of approbation from Earlham would be more grateful to me, than the loudest applause of the whole world besides."

"COLLEGE, DUBLIN, *September* 29, 1805.

"My mind has lately been very much occupied with the consideration of the lawfulness of taking oaths, because my College pursuits would lose a great deal of their stimulus, if I thought I should not go to the Bar, for the information which I may acquire here would be comparatively of little use to any one but a lawyer. To remove or strengthen my doubts, I have been reading 'Paley's Philosophy,' and, indeed, he has almost convinced me that taking oaths is not the kind of swearing that is prohibited. I have endeavoured to free my mind from prejudice on one side, and interest on the other; and I think that if I felt a bias at all, it was against swearing, which arose from the fear of being actuated by my wishes, rather than by reason."

In October 1805, he and his friend North took their seats together in the "Historical Society." In one of his letters, he speaks of the dread with which he looked forward to

"such a tremendous thing" as addressing so large an audience. His first speech, however, met with unexpected success. One of his fellow-collegians still remembers "its producing quite a sensation among the undergraduates;" and he himself thus writes to Earlham :—

"*November* 1805.

"I did not answer your letter before, because I wished to state the result of my speech, which is beyond my utmost expectations. Five persons spoke besides myself: ninety-two members gave Returns, of which eighty-five were for me. A law exists in the Society, that if any one should get eighty Returns for a speech, he is to receive the '*remarkable thanks.*' There has never been an opportunity of putting this law in force till now."

"WEDNESDAY, *December* 25, 1805.

"I made a speech last night in the Historical Society, and, contrary to my former determination, I intend to speak once more. I am induced to do this by getting a great many more Returns than I had any reason to expect.

"I have, I fear, very little chance of getting the premium; however, if I do not, I am perfectly satisfied with the result of my studies this term. I have taken very little sleep, amusement, or exercise lately, the consequence of which is, that I have been very unwell."

His hopes were more than realised; not only did he again carry off the premium, but the silver medal of the Historical Society was awarded him, of which he subsequently gained the other three prizes. At College, indeed, nothing but good fortune attended him. His exertions were uniformly crowned with success; his mind found scope for its unceasing activity; his circle of friends was choice, yet large; and a zest was added to all enjoyments, by the bright prospect afforded him at Earlham. The gradual overcasting of his hopes of wealth but little affected his spirits. He says in a letter to a friend :—

"I am very sorry to hear of your unhappinesses; I wish I could do anything to alleviate them. I think I might very well spare happiness enough for a moderate person, and still have enough left for myself."

He some years after referred to his success in College as having "produced this amount of self-confidence."

"I was, and have always been, conscious that though others had great talents, mine were moderate; that what I wanted in ability, I must make up by perseverance; in short, that I must work hard to win, but withal a sense that by working hard, I could win. This

conviction that I could do nothing without labour, but that I could do anything, or almost anything, which others did, by dint of vigorous application; this, coupled with a resolved mind, a kind of plodding, dogged determination, over which difficulties had little influence, and with considerable industry and perseverance; these have been the talents committed to my trust."

From the dissipation then too prevalent in the University he was happily preserved, partly by his close and incessant occupation, partly by his Earlham connexion, and partly by his previous education; for although his letters up to this period contain no direct mention of religion, yet the Christian principles which his mother had instilled into his mind retained a certain influence; while his natural firmness of character enabled him to disregard the taunts to which he was exposed. He found more difficulty in sacrificing to his academical pursuits the strong inclination for field sports, which had been cherished at Earl's Colne, and which accompanied him through life. In a letter to Earlham, dated May 1806, he says,—

"One of the various advantages I have derived from our connexion, is the check it has been to my sporting inclinations. I am thoroughly convinced that, had my mind received another bent, had my pursuits been directed towards sporting, its charms would have been irresistible. A life dedicated to amusement must be most unsatisfactory. . . . . I think you need be under no apprehension in regard to —— having too much influence over me: as to my being member for Weymouth, it is a totally chimerical idea, for were I ever so willing, it is quite impracticable, so you may lay aside all fears of my becoming a *great man*."

His letters to his mother at this period are chiefly confined to matters of business; one trait in them is, however, too characteristic to be passed over without notice. Nearly all of them conclude with inquiries and directions about his horses, in which he always took so lively an interest, that it almost might be called *personal friendship*. "I mean," he tells his mother, "to visit Weymouth before returning to Ireland, to see how my horses and relations do." He was, however, obliged to hasten his return to Dublin, and on his way thither he had a remarkable escape, the particulars of which he thus describes:—

"In the year 1806, I was travelling with the Earlham party in Scotland. I left them to return to the College of Dublin. In consequence of some conversation about the Parkgate vessels, with my

present wife, then Hannah Gurney, she extracted from me a promise that I would never go by Parkgate. I was exceedingly impatient to be at Dublin, in order to prepare for my examination: when I reached Chester, the captain of the Parkgate packet came to me, and invited me to go with him. The wind was fair; the vessel was to sail in a few hours; he was sure I should be in Dublin early the next morning, whereas a place in the Holyhead mail was doubtful, and at best I must lose the next day by travelling through Wales. My promise was a bitter mortification to me, but I could not dispense with it. I drank tea, and played at cards with a very large party. About eight or nine o'clock they all went away on board the vessel, and of the 119 persons who embarked as passengers, 118 were drowned before midnight."

It was during this tour in Scotland that his attention appears to have been drawn, with increased earnestness, to the subject of religion. When at Perth, he purchased a large Bible, with the resolution, which he steadfastly kept, of perusing a portion of it every day; and he mentions in a letter, dated September 10, 1806, that a change had been worked in his mind with respect to reading the Holy Scriptures. "Formerly," he says, "I read generally rather as a duty than as a pleasure, but now I read them with great interest, and, I may say, happiness. I never before felt so assured that the only means of being happy, is from seeking the assistance of a superior Being, or so inclined to endeavour to submit myself to the direction of principle."

The College examination was now again approaching, and he was not so well prepared as usual, having given, as he feared, too much time to Optics, of which science he speaks as "the most delightful and captivating of studies." After the examination was over, he writes to the party at Earlham:—

"I never had such a contest. The examiner could not decide in the Hall, so we were obliged to have two hours more this morning; however, I can congratulate you once more. . . . . I venerate Optics for what they have done for me in this examination."

In the course of this examination, he gave an answer to one of the *vivâ voce* questions, which the examiner thought incorrect, and he passed on to the next man; but to the astonishment of the other undergraduates, Buxton rose from his seat and said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but I am convinced my answer was correct." The examiner, after some demur, consented to refer to a book of authority on the sub-

ject, and it proved that Buxton's answer was the one given in the latest edition of the work.

"*November* 1806.

"Every day brings us new accounts of disturbances in the remote parts of the country; I am almost inclined to fear there will be a rebellion. I have been thinking a great deal lately of what I should do in case the corps were again established in College. There is to me no question so dubious or perplexing, as whether resistance against danger from an enemy is allowable: however, if I can trust my own determination, I shall not be at all swayed by the example of others, or by the disgrace which would attend a refusal to enlist."

A day or two later, he continues:—

"I was extremely tired at the Historical Society on Wednesday night. I was made President, and you cannot imagine the labour of keeping a hundred unruly and violent men orderly and obedient. The all-engrossing subject here at present is the prospect of a rebellion, if I may say the *prospect* when I think there is the reality. Every day we hear of fresh murders; and the Bishop of Elphin, who is of the Law family, declared openly in the Castle-yard, that in the five and twenty years he had resided here, the people in his diocese were never in so desperate a state of rebellion."

On his return to England for a short holiday, he says:—

"London, *January* 23, 1807.

"It is a very great pleasure to me that I can tell you some news, which I think will delight you. In the first place, I have arrived here safe and sound. In the second, I have for the twelfth time secured the premium, and Valde bene in omnibus."

On the 14th of April in the same year he received his thirteenth premium, and also the highest honour of the University,—the Gold Medal. With these distinctions, and the four silver medals from the Historical Society, he prepared to return to England. At this juncture a circumstance occurred which might have turned the whole current of his life. A proposal was made to him by the electors to come forward as candidate for the representation of the University, and good grounds were given him to expect a triumphant return. No higher token of esteem than this could have been offered to one without wealth or Irish connexion, and without the smallest claim upon the consideration of the University, except what his personal and academical character afforded. Such an offer it was not easy to reject, and he was, as he says at the time, "extremely agitated and pleased by it." He weighed the

pleasure, the distinction, the influence promised by the political career, thus unexpectedly opened before him; and he set against these considerations the duties which his approaching marriage would bring upon him. Prudence prevailed, and he declined the proposal. His friend Mr North writes to him:—

"I think all hearts would have been in your favour, if you had made your appearance—and still they cannot convince themselves that you intend to go boldly through with your resolution—'Come then, my guide, my genius, come along!' You were mistaken in thinking fortune (in one sense) a necessary qualification; there is an honourable exception for the Universities."

Mr Buxton, however, had come to a deliberate decision, and it was not to be shaken. He reached England at the end of April, and in the following month his marriage took place.

In one of his papers he thus alludes to the closing circumstances of his academical career:—

"On May 13, 1807, I obtained the object of my long attachment—having refused, in consequence of the prospect of this marriage, a most honourable token of the esteem of the University of Dublin. The prospect was indeed flattering to youthful ambition,—to become a member of Parliament, and my constituents men of thought and education and honour and principle,—my companions, my competitors,—those who had known me, and observed me for years.

"I feel now a pride in recollecting that it was from these men I received this mark of approbation,—from men, with whom I had no family alliance, not even the natural connexion of compatriotism, and without high birth or splendid fortune or numerous connexions to recommend me. I suspended my determination for one day, beset by my friends, who were astonished at the appearance of a doubt, and having closely considered all points, I determined to decline the intended honour; and from that day to this, thanks to God, I have never lamented the determination."

CHAPTER III.

1807–1812.

THE first few months of Mr Buxton's married life were passed at a small cottage close to his grandmother's seat at Bellfield, and in the neighbourhood of his mother, who had contracted a second marriage with Edmund Henning, Esq.,

of Weymouth, and had left Essex to reside at the latter place.

His expectations of wealth had been disappointed, and he found that his fortunes must depend upon his own exertions. After deliberate consideration, he relinquished the idea of following the profession of the law, and entered into negotiations in different quarters, with a view to establishing himself in business. For a while these were unsuccessful, and during this time he suffered severely from the pain of present inaction, and the obscurity that rested on the future. In after-life, when referring to this period he said, "I longed for any employment that would produce me a hundred a-year, if I had to work twelve hours a-day for it." Nearly a year passed away before his anxieties were brought to a conclusion. The winter was spent at Earlham, where his first child was born. Soon afterwards, in a letter to his wife from London, he says, "I slept at Brick Lane; my uncles Sampson and Osgood Hanbury were there, and revived my old feelings of good nephewship, they treated me so kindly. This morning I met Mr Randall and your father. I think that I shall become a Blackwell Hall factor."

This intention was prevented by an unexpected turn in his fortunes, resulting from his friendly interview with his uncles. Within a few days Mr Sampson Hanbury of Truman's Brewery in Spitalfields, offered him a situation in that establishment, with a prospect of becoming a partner after three years' probation. He joyfully acceded to the proposal, and entered with great ardour upon his new sphere of action. He writes, July 1808, to his mother, "I was up this morning at four, and do not expect to finish my day's work before twelve to-night—my excuse for silence. I have not neglected your business." At the close of the year he succeeded Mr Hanbury in the occupation of a house connected with the brewery, in which he continued to reside for several years.

During these years his correspondence was not extensive. Among the few letters which have been preserved is the following, addressed to his wife, who had accompanied one of her brothers to the Isle of Wight. Mr Buxton had arranged to join them there; but on arriving at South-

ampton, he found that all communication with the island was interdicted on account of the secret expedition then about to sail from Cowes, as it afterwards proved, to Walcheren.

"SOUTHAMPTON, *June* 15, 1809.

"Now that I have finished my coffee, I think I cannot employ my time more profitably or more pleasantly than in sending a few lines to you. I am afraid the embargo has been a great trouble to you. It was so to me when I first arrived, as the idea of spending some time with your party was particularly pleasant; however, either by the aid of 'divine philosophy,' or from finding that the misfortune was irremediable, in a short time I was reconciled to my fate, and began to consider how best to enjoy what was within my reach. As I could not have the living companions that I most wished for, I went to a bookseller's shop to endeavour to find some agreeable dead ones, and having made choice of 'Tristram Shandy' and a 'Patriot King,' I proceeded in their honourable company to the water side, took a boat, and went off to Netley Abbey. I thoroughly enjoyed this excursion. First I went all over the interior, and then walked leisurely round it at some distance, stopping and reading at every scene that I particularly liked. Then I went up into the wood, to a spot which seems to have been formed for a dining-room. While the boatman was at dinner, I went over into the next field to a higher ground. I hope this did not escape you. The four ivy-covered broken towers just below, a party dining on the grass plat, the intermediate distance of trees, and the sea behind, made it, I think, the finest view I ever saw. I only hope you have sketched it; and, next to it, I should wish for a drawing of the nearest window from the inside—I mean the one that is tolerably perfect, with a great deal of ivy over the middle pillar. I had a pleasant row home, and have since been thinking about your party with the greatest pleasure; and, amongst other thoughts connected with you, it has forcibly struck me how beneficial it is sometimes to be amongst strangers, it gives such a taste and a relish for the society of those one loves."

TO MRS HENNING.

"*December* 3, 1809.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—I am very much obliged to you for your letter, which furnished me with several useful hints, though not upon the particular subject on which I wanted information.

"As to the general propriety and duty of introducing Christianity into India, there cannot be, I imagine, a question; but is this the proper season? is not our empire in India too unstable to authorise such an experiment? In short, I wished to determine its political propriety, to examine it with the eye of a statesman, not of a Christian, and to inquire, not what Fenelon, but what Machiavel would have said of it. The result which I have come to is, that it would be *highly expedient*, and perhaps the only measure which could reinstate our declining power in the East.

"Your letter shews powers of which I may make eminent use, but observe, I must qualify this praise by saying that it wanted method throughout the whole, and greater pains bestowed upon the parts.

"The Poor Laws is the next question I shall consider, and I expect great assistance from you. The only restrictions that I would suggest are a parsimoniousness of Scripture quotations, and a care against negligence in the dress of the parts, for, after all, appearance and style are more than matter: a diamond is but a dirty pebble till it is polished. Virgil and his translator Trap only differed as to dress. The images, the incidents, the characters are the same in both, yet the one is the best poem in the Latin language, and the other perhaps the worst in the English."

Although, during his term of probation at the Brewery he was closely occupied in making himself master of his new vocation, he yet found time for the study of English literature, and especially of political economy. "My maxims are," he writes, "never to begin a book without finishing it; never to consider it finished till I know it; and to study with a whole mind." He admitted, in after-life, that even at this early period he had indulged a distant idea of entering Parliament; and, in consequence of this, he continued to practise the art of public speaking in a debating club of which he was a member.

"I must tell you," he writes to Mr North, December 1810, "of a signal reformation which has taken place. I have become again a hard reader, and of sterling books. In spite of your marriage cause, I hold myself your equal in Blackstone and in Montesquieu, and your superior in Bacon, parts of whom I have read with Mallettian avidity. I have not been much at 'The Academics,' but it goes on famously; your memory is held in the highest estimation—even our oracle Twiss speaks well of you, Grant and Bowdler are, I fear, gone from us."

His former schoolfellow, Mr Horace Twiss, thus describes meeting him at this time:—

"We had been at school together at the celebrated Dr Burney's, of Greenwich, and were very intimate.

"Buxton was then, as in after-life, extraordinarily tall, and was called by his playfellows 'Elephant Buxton.' He was at that time, as afterwards, like the animal he was called from, of a kind and gentle nature; but he did not then exhibit any symptoms of the elephantine talent he afterwards evinced.

"I myself very often did his Latin lessons for him; and, as he was somewhat older and much bigger than I was, I found him, in many respects, a valuable ally. When I was about twenty, I became a member of 'The Academics,' a society in London (like the

'Historical' in Dublin, and the 'Speculative' in Edinburgh), where the topics of the day were debated. There I heard, on my first or second evening of attendance, a speech of great ability, from a man of great stature; and I should have been assured it was my old schoolfellow I saw before me, but that I could not suppose it possible so dull a boy could have become so clever a man. He it was, however; and I renewed my friendly intercourse with him, both at the society and in private.

"Our *chums* were poor North, afterwards distinguished in Parliament and at the Irish Bar, who died at between forty and fifty; and Henry, the younger son of the great Grattan. We afterwards sat altogether in the House of Commons, with some others of our fellow-Academics, the two Grants and Spring Rice. Horner had been an Academic, but he was before our time. Of late years, Buxton was chiefly resident in Norfolk, but our mutual good-will continued to the last."

From childhood, the duty of active benevolence had been impressed on him by his mother, who used to set before him the idea of taking up some great cause by which he might promote the happiness of man. On beginning to live in London he at once sought opportunities of usefulness, and in this pursuit he received great assistance from an acquaintance, which ripened into friendship, with the Quaker philosopher and philanthropist, William Allen. This good man had long been engaged upon objects of enlightened benevolence, and by him Mr Buxton was from time to time initiated into some of those questions, to which his after-life was devoted.

One of the most important of these had already dawned upon him. He writes to Mrs Buxton, December 1808:—

"I have one reason for wishing to remain in town, which is, that I am going to become a member of a small society, now instituting, for the purpose of calling the public mind to the bad effects and inefficiency of capital punishments."

And at a subsequent period, he says—

"From the time of my connexion with the Brewery in 1808 to 1816, I took a part in all the charitable objects of that distressed district, more especially those connected with education, the Bible Society, and the deep sufferings of the weavers."

All these labours he shared with his brother-in-law, Mr Samuel Hoare, of Hampstead, between whom and himself there existed then, and through life, a friendship and fellowship, far beyond what usually results from such a connexion. Nor was his friendship with his sister-in-law,

Mrs Fry, less valuable to him. He felt (what indeed was felt by every human being who saw much of her) the most profound love and reverence for her exalted character. It was partly from his pleasure in hearing her preach that he was, throughout life, a very frequent visitant at Quaker meetings. But also, there never was any one who relished more keenly what Shakspeare calls, "The sessions of sweet silent thought," whether in the stillness of a Friend's meeting-house, or in the fields. To wander and meditate in the deep solitude of a pine wood, was, perhaps, the thing in the world that he most thoroughly enjoyed.

TO MRS BUXTON.

"*September* 23, 1810.

"I have passed a very quiet and industrious week, up early, breakfast at eight o'clock, dinner near six, and the evenings to myself, which have been well employed over my favourite Blackstone. I read him till near ten last night, and then Jeremy Taylor till past eleven, and could hardly give him up, he was so very entertaining a companion. . . . . This morning I went to Gracechurch Street meeting, I was rather late, which made me feel hurried, and prevented my having sufficient time to myself before meeting; however, I had made a little use of my friend Jeremy at breakfast, and this and last night's readings gave me occupation for my thoughts. I saw William Allen, who wants me to call upon him to-morrow, as he says he has found a place for the boys' school as suitable as if we were to build one. This, I know, will please you, but will alarm you also, lest we should forget the girls."

It has been mentioned that Mr Buxton was the eldest of three sons. Edward North, the third brother, a wayward lad, had been sent to sea as a midshipman in an East Indiaman, commanded by his relative Captain Dumbleton; but in his first voyage he left his ship and entered the King's service. From that time his family had received no tidings of him, and by degrees they became impressed with the painful conviction that he had died at sea. The suspense of five years was at last brought to an end, by the arrival of a letter to Mr Buxton from one of his brother's shipmates, announcing that he had arrived in a dying state at Gosport, and was earnestly desirous to see some of his relations. He had been attacked by dysentery while on board ship at Bombay; and, feeling that his days were numbered, he became intensely anxious to reach home once more. He hastened to England in the first ship by which

he could obtain a passage; and on his arrival at Gosport, was carried to Haslar Hospital, whence he despatched a letter to his mother. This letter was unfortunately delayed, in consequence of its having been directed to the house at Earl's Colne, which had been parted with some years before, and the unhappy youth—he was only nineteen—in the morbid state of his feelings, became so strongly impressed by a sense of his neglect in never having communicated with his friends, that he felt persuaded they would now refuse to acknowledge him. A second letter, in which he besought that some one of the family would consent to visit him on his deathbed, reached Mr Buxton, and in two hours he and his brother Charles were on the road to Gosport, which they reached on the following morning. With mingled emotions of hope and fear they set out for the Hospital. Having been directed to a large ward full of the sick and dying, they walked through the room without being able to discover the object of their search; till at length they were struck by the earnestness with which an emaciated youth upon one of the sickbeds was gazing at them. On their approaching his bedside, although he could scarcely articulate a word, his face was lit up with an expression of delight that sufficiently shewed that he recognised them: but it was not for some moments that they could trace in his haggard features the lineaments of their long-lost brother.

A few days afterwards Mr Buxton writes:—

"Gosport, *August* 10, 1811.

"It is pleasant to be with Edward, he seems so happy in the idea of having his friends about him. This morning I thought him strong enough to hear part of a chapter in St Luke on prayer, and the 20th Psalm. Charles then went away, and I mentioned to him how applicable some of the passages were to his state; he said, he felt them so, and that he had been very unfortunate in having been on board ship where religion is so neglected; that he had procured a Bible, and one of his friends had sometimes read to him, but not so often as he wished. That he had hoped and prayed that he might reach England, more that he might confess his sins to me than for any other reason; that, supposing at length that there was next to no chance of this, he had dictated a letter to me upon the subject, which is now in his box. When I told him, that as his illness had brought him into such a frame of mind, it was impossible for me to regret it, let the event be what it would, he said he considered it as a mercy now, but that nobody could tell what his

sufferings had been. I then entered into a kind of short history of what I considered to be inculcated in the Testament, 'that Christ came to call sinners to repentance.' He felt consolation from this; but again said, that he had been indeed a sinner. I then told him that I hoped he did not ever omit to pray for assistance, and I added that Charles and I had joined in prayer for him last night. He seemed so much affected by this, that I did not think it right to press the conversation further. Does not all this furnish a striking proof how our sorrows may be converted into joys? I can look upon his illness in no other light than as a most merciful dispensation. It is most affectingly delightful to see his lowliness of mind, and his gratitude to all of us. I cannot help thinking that his mind is more changed than his body."

He died a few days afterwards.

In 1811 Mr Buxton was admitted as a partner in the Brewery; and during the ensuing seven years he was almost exclusively devoted to his business. Soon after his admission, his senior partners, struck by his energy and force of mind, placed in his hands the difficult and responsible task of remodelling their whole system of management. It would be superfluous to enter into the details of his proceedings, though, perhaps, he never displayed greater vigour and firmness than in carrying through this undertaking. For two or three years he was occupied from morning till night, in prosecuting, step by step, his plans of reform: a single example may indicate with what spirit he grappled with the difficulties that beset him on all sides.

One of the principal clerks was an honest man, and a valuable servant; but he was wedded to the old system, and viewed with great antipathy the young partner's proposed innovations. At length, on one occasion, he went so far as to thwart Mr Buxton's plans. The latter took no notice of this at the time, except desiring him to attend in the counting-house at six o'clock the next morning. Mr Buxton met him there at the appointed hour; and, without any expostulation, or a single angry word, desired him to produce his books, as he meant for the future to undertake the charge of them himself, in addition to his other duties. Amazed at this unexpected decision, the clerk yielded entirely; he promised complete submission for the future; he made his wife intercede for him; and Mr Buxton, who valued his character and services, was induced to restore him to his place. They afterwards became very good

friends, and the salutary effect of the changes introduced by Mr Buxton was at length admitted by his leading opponent; nor, except in one instance, did he ever contend against them again. On that occasion Mr Buxton merely sent him a message "that he had better meet him in the counting-house, at six o'clock the next morning,"—and the book-keeper's opposition was heard of no more.

We may add, that among other points wanting reform, he found that the men employed were in many instances wholly uneducated. To the remedy of this evil, he took a more direct road than exhortation or advice. He called them together, and simply said to them: "This day six weeks I shall discharge every man who cannot read and write." He provided them a schoolmaster, and means of learning, and on the appointed day held an examination. Such had been the earnestness to learn that not one man was dismissed.

He was also very careful to prevent any work from being done in the Brewery on the Sunday, and the strict observance of it which he introduced has been thoroughly maintained up to the present time.

The success which crowned his exertions in business materially paved his way to public life. He was gradually relieved from the necessity of attending, in person, to the details of its management, although he continued throughout his life to take a part in the general superintendence of the concern.

CHAPTER IV.

1812—1816.

Mr Buxton was, of course, closely bound to his London avocations; but almost every autumn he spent some weeks at Earlham, enjoying the recreation of shooting, in company with Mr Samuel Hoare. It was during one of these visits, that he first addressed a public meeting. His brother-in-law, Mr Joseph John Gurney, in September 1812, insisted that for once he should leave his sport, and give his aid in the second meeting of the Norfolk Bible Society.

His speech on that occasion is thus alluded to by Mr J. J. Gurney :—

"There are many who can still remember the remarkable effect produced in one of the earliest public meetings of the Norfolk Bible Society, more than thirty years ago, by one of his speeches, distinguished for its acuteness and good sense, as well as for the Christian temper in which it was delivered. His commanding person, his benevolent and highly intellectual expression of countenance, his full-toned voice, together with his manly yet playful eloquence, electrified the assembly, and many were those on that day who rejoiced that so noble and just a cause had obtained so strenuous and able an advocate."

Some indications have been already given of the increasing power of religious principle in Mr Buxton's mind; but he had not yet been fully brought under its influence, nor had he acquired clear views as to some of the fundamental truths of Christianity. In 1811, he mentions that during a visit to Lynn, he had met his friends the Rev. Edward Edwards, and the Rev. Robert Hankinson, who recommended him to attend the ministry of the Rev. Josiah Pratt, in Wheeler Street Chapel, Spitalfields: and to the preaching of that excellent clergyman he attributed, with the liveliest gratitude, his first real acquaintance with the doctrines of Christianity. He himself says—"It was much and of vast moment that I there learned from Mr Pratt." —He wrote to Mr Pratt thirty years afterwards, "Whatever I have done in my life for Africa, the seeds of it were sown in my heart, in Wheeler Street Chapel.

With him, indeed, there was no sudden change, as in many men of well-known piety. Both nature and education had tended to prepare him for religion. His mind, ever disposed (in Bacon's words) to "prefer things of substance, before things of show"—with a strong love for truth, and susceptible of deep feeling—afforded, perhaps, a fit soil for the reception of those truths, which at length struck deep root there. On the other hand, he regarded his tendency to become wholly absorbed in the work before him as a great bar to his progress in higher things. Thus he writes to one of his relatives at Earlham :—

"HAMPSTEAD, *March* 21, 1812.

"I had determined, before I received your last letter, to thank you, dear C——, myself, for much pleasure, and I think a little

profit (much less than it ought to have been), in observing the progress of your mind. It does indeed give me real joy to see you and others of your family striving in your race with such full purpose of heart; and the further I feel left behind—the more I feel engaged in other pursuits—so much the more I admire and love the excellence, which I hardly endeavour to reach: and so much the more I perceive the infinite superiority of your objects over mine.

"When I contrast your pursuits with my pursuits, and your life with my life, I always feel the comparison a wholesome and a humiliating lesson, and it makes me see the ends for which I labour in their proper light; and my heart is ready to confess, that 'Thou hast chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from thee.' How is it then, with this contrast constantly staring me in the face whenever I think seriously, that it has no effect, or next to none, on my practice? I see the excellence of the walk you have chosen, and the madness of dedicating myself to anything but to the preparation of that journey which I must so shortly take. I know, that if success shall crown all my projects, I shall gain that which will never satisfy me, 'that which is not bread.' I know the poverty of our most darling schemes—the meanness of our most delicious prospects—the transitoriness of our most durable possessions—when weighed against that fulness of joy and eternity of bliss which are the reward of those who seek them aright. All this I see with the utmost certainty—that two and two make four is not clearer; how is it, then, that with these speculative opinions, my practical ones are so entirely different? I am irritable about trifles, eager after pleasures, and anxious about business: various objects of this kind engross my attention at all times; they pursue me even to Meeting and to Church, and seem to grudge the few moments which are devoted to higher considerations, and strive to bring back to the temple of the Lord the sellers, and the buyers, and the money-changers. My reason tells me, that these things are utterly indifferent; but my practice says, that they only are worthy of thought and attention. My practice says, 'Thou art increased with goods, and hast need of nothing;' but my reason teaches me, 'Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.'

. . . . "I have in this letter divulged the train of thinking which is constantly recurring to my mind. . . . . If I have said too much in any part of it, I am sure I do not go beyond the truth in saying, that hardly anything comes so near my heart as my love for my sweet sisters."

In the commencement of the year 1813 he was visited by an illness which brought him to the brink of the grave. How momentous an era he felt this to have been, we may learn from the following paper, written after his recovery:—

"*February* 7, 1813.

"After so severe an illness as that with which I have lately been visited, it may be advantageous to record the most material circumstances attendant upon it. May my bodily weakness, and the sud-

denness with which it came, remind me of the uncertainty of life; and may the great and immediate mercy, bestowed upon me spiritually, be a continual memorial, that 'the Lord is full of compassion, and long suffering,' and 'a very present help in trouble!'

"I was seized with a bilious fever, in January. When I first felt myself unwell, I prayed that I might have a dangerous illness, provided that illness might bring me nearer to my God. I gradually grew worse; and when the disorder had assumed an appearance very alarming to those about me, I spent nearly an hour in most fervent prayer. I have been, for some years, perplexed with doubts; I do not know if they did not arise more from the fear of doubting than from any other cause. The object of my prayer was, that this perplexity might be removed; and the next day, when I set about examining my mind, I found that it was entirely removed, and that it was replaced by a degree of certain conviction, totally different from anything I had before experienced. It would be difficult to express the satisfaction and joy which I derived from this alteration. 'Now know I that my Redeemer liveth' was the sentiment uppermost in my mind, and in the merits of that Redeemer I felt a confidence that made me look on the prospect of death with perfect indifference. No one action of my life presented itself with any sort of consolation. I knew that by myself I stood justly condemned; but I felt released from the penalties of sin by the blood of our sacrifice. In *Him* was all my trust."

After his recovery, he thus writes to Earlham:—

"Perhaps you might think that your letters were not sufficiently valued by me if they remained unnoticed; they were both truly welcome, especially where they described your feelings at the prospect of the termination (I earnestly hope only the earthly termination) of our long and faithful union. My wife tells me that she said in her letter that I mentioned you all in my illness, This was but a languid description of the extent and force of love I felt towards you, and of gratitude to you to whom I owe so great a portion of all that has been pleasant to me in my past life, and perhaps much of that which was consolatory to me at that awful but happy period. C—— calls it a chastisement, but I never felt it as such. I looked upon it when I was at the worst (and have not yet ceased to do so) as a gift, and a blessing, and the choicest of my possessions. When I was too weak to move or speak, my mind and heart were at full work on these meditations, and my only lamentation was that I could not feel sufficiently glad or grateful for the mercy, as unbounded as unmerited, which I experienced. This mercy was to know the sins of my past life, that the best actions of it were but dust and ashes, and good for nothing; that, by the righteous doom of the law, I stood convicted and condemned; but that full and sufficient satisfaction had already been made by Him who came to save sinners; and such was the ease and confidence with which this conviction inspired me, that death was not attended with a terror."

Fifteen years afterwards, he thus refers to the impressions

made upon his mind during this illness. "It was then," he says, "that some clouds in my mind were dispersed; and from that day to this, whatever reason I may have had to distrust my own salvation, I have never been harassed by a doubt respecting our revealed religion." As his health and strength returned, he engaged with increased earnestness in supporting various benevolent societies, especially the Bible Society; and his commonplace books during the years 1813–1816 are chiefly filled with memoranda on this subject. He came prominently forward in the controversy between the supporters of the Bible Society and those who united with Dr Marsh, afterwards Bishop of Peterborough, in opposing it.

These occupations filled up the short intervals of leisure afforded by his close attention to business; and while he continued to reside at the Brewery, few events occurred to vary his life. Some glimpses into the state of his mind are given in the following letters:—

"SPITALFIELDS, *December* 25, 1813.

". . . . I have often observed the advantage of having some fixed settling time in pecuniary affairs. It gives an opportunity of ascertaining the balance of losses and gains, and of seeing where we have succeeded and where failed, and what errors or neglects have caused the failure.

"Now, I thought, why not balance the mind in the same way—observe our progress, and trace to their source our mistakes and oversights? And what better time for this than Christmas-day, followed by Sunday? And what better employment of those days? So it was fixed; and, consequently, I refused invitation after invitation—to Upton, Doughty Street, Plashet, Hampstead, Coggeshall, and Clifton. And now for a history of my day. After breakfast, I read, *attentively*, the 1st of St Peter, with some degree of that spirit with which I always wish to study the Scriptures. To me, at least, the Scriptures are nothing without prayer; and it is sometimes surprising to me what beauties they unfold, how much even of worldly wisdom they contain, and how they are stamped with the clear impression of truth, when read under any portion of this influence; and without it how unmoving they appear.

"I also read Cooper's first 'Practical Sermon,' the text—'What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' This is a subject which, of all others of the kind, most frequently engages my thoughts. . . . . Well, I went to church: we had one of Mr Pratt's best sermons, and I stayed the Communion. I could not but feel grateful to see so many persons, who at least had some serious thoughts of religion. . . . . I am not so ignorant of myself as to think that I have made any suitable advances. No.

Every day's experience is a sufficient antidote against any such flattering delusion; for every day I see, and have reason to condemn, the folly, the insanity which immerses me—the whole of my mind and powers—in so trifling a portion of their interest as this world contains. But yet I feel it an inestimable blessing to have been conducted to the precincts and the threshold of truth, and to have some desires, vague and ineffectual as they are, after better things.

"In the evening I sat down, in a business-like manner, to my mental account. In casting up the incidental blessings of the year, I found none to compare with my illness: it gave such a life, such a reality and nearness, to my prospects of futurity; it told me, in language so conclusive and intelligible, that here is not my abiding city. It expounded so powerfully the scriptural doctrine of Atonement, by shewing what the award of my fate must be, if it depended upon my own merits, and what that love is which offers to avert condemnation by the merits of another: in short, my sickness has been a source of happiness to me in every way."

In the summer of the year 1815, he removed from London to a house at North End, Hampstead, that his children, now four in number, might have the benefit of country air. The following extract is from his commonplace book:—

"North End, *Sunday, August* 6, 1815.

"Being too unwell to go to church, I have spent the morning (with occasional wanderings in the fields) in reading and pondering upon the Bible; viz., St James's and St John's epistles. How much sound wisdom and practical piety in the first, how devout and holy a spirit breathes through the second: the one exposing, with a master's hand, the infirmities, the temptations, and the delusions of man; the other, evidencing the love he teaches, seems of too celestial a spirit to mingle much with human affairs, and perpetually reverts to the source of his consolation and hope: with him, Christ is all in all, the sum and substance of all his exhortations, the beginning and end of every chapter.

"I now sit down to recall some marked events, which have lately happened. First, then, Friday, July 7, was an extraordinary day to me. In the morning, I ascertained that all the hopes we had indulged of large profits in business were false. We were sadly disappointed, for I went to town in the morning some thousands of pounds richer in my own estimation than I returned at night. This was my first trial; next, about nine o'clock, a dreadful explosion of gunpowder took place in a house adjacent to the brewery; eight lives were lost, and great damage done. For a long time it seemed beyond hope to expect to keep the fire from the premises. The morning changed me from affluence to competence, and the evening was likely to have converted competence into poverty.

"To finish all, at night my house was robbed. This, if we had heard it, might have seriously alarmed my wife, in her present delicate state of health. How easily can I bear the transitions of fortune, and see without murmuring, and even with cheerfulness,

my golden hopes blighted; but 'bitter indeed, and intimately keen,' would any wound be that affected *her*. I have often repeated these lines of Shakspeare:—

——— 'Steep me in poverty to the very lips,
Give to captivity me and my utmost hopes,
I still can find in some part of my soul
A drop of patience. . . . .
But there, where I have garner'd up my heart,' &c.

"On the following Tuesday I went to Weymouth, and found the affairs of a friend, in whom I am sincerely interested, in a very bad state. This is to me a subject of much anxiety; but on my return home I had another and a deeper trial. I found that it was necessary to investigate ——'s business, which seems involved in much difficulty. These two events together have been very mortifying to me, but I have endeavoured to meet them with submissive fortitude. Yet I find that I can suffer my own misfortunes with comparative indifference, but cannot sit so easily under the misfortunes of those that are near to me; but in this I hope to improve, and to be enabled to look upon trials, in whatever form they appear, as visitations from the merciful hand of God. I hope my late uneasinesses have not been entirely thrown away upon me. They have brought me to feel the poverty and unsteadfastness of all human possessions, and to look upon life as a flower that falleth, while the grace and the fashion of it perisheth—as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. It has made me, too, (though still sadly deficient) more earnest and more frequent in my appeals and entreaties to God, that He would give me His wisdom to direct me, and His strength to support me; and, above all, that He would emancipate my heart from the shackles of the flesh, and fix my hopes beyond all that is in the world, 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.' Turn my heart to Thee, O Lord; make me feel, daily and hourly feel, as well as know—to act upon the persuasion, as well as to be persuaded—that only in Thee I can rest in peace, and only in Thy service I can act with wisdom."

TO JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY, ESQ.

"HAMPSTEAD, *April* 12, 1816.

"It is very true that I have been worried of late, but not about the Malt Tax, for that is only a question of profit, one that I could not regulate, and I find no disposition in my mind to regret what is irremediable. The thing which has given me uneasiness, is the discovery of what I consider errors in the management of the department of the brewery which has fallen to me lately; and these errors I am determined to cure. Now this involves much labour—but labour I do not regard—and some anxiety, considering my inexperience upon many points connected with it: but I cannot say that I have felt this much. The true cause of my disquietude arises from a certain feature in my own mind, which I can hardly describe; a kind of unregulated ardour in any pursuit which appears to me to be of great importance, which takes captive all my faculties, and binds them down to that pursuit, and will not let them or me rest till it is accomplished. I hate this; it is so un-

pleasant to wake, and to go to sleep, with your head full of vats and tubs; and I disapprove it more than I hate it. No man, I think, can have more abstract conviction of the folly and futility of such engagement of heart upon objects so utterly trifling and undurable. I see that it is an infirmity; I deeply feel that it chokes the good seed, and is a most pernicious weed, and I feel the breaches that it makes in my own quiet: yet so much am I its slave that it will intrude into the midst of such reflections, and carry me off to my next gyle.* How sincerely I do often wish that I could direct this fervent energy about temporals into its proper channel: that I could be as warm about things of infinite importance as I am about dust and ashes.

"If I cannot accomplish this, I wish we could divide it, I keep half for my business, and give you half for your book.† How can you, my dear brother, be languid and spiritless with such a thing before you, and with such a capacity for doing it excellently? Are you not ashamed that I should be more anxious about making porter than you are about making Christians? At it, my dear fellow! at it with vigour; but when you find your mind unsuited for it, write me another letter, for the last was a great pleasure to your affectionate brother, T. F. BUXTON."

CHAPTER V.

1816, 1817.

AN incident which occurred during the summer of 1816, is thus mentioned by Mr Buxton in a letter to his wife, who fortunately was absent at the time:—

"SPITALFIELDS, *July* 15, 1816.

"As you must hear the story of our dog Prince, I may as well tell it you. On Thursday morning, when I got on my horse at S. Hoare's, David told me that there was something the matter with Prince, that he had killed the cat, and almost killed the new dog, and had bit at him and Elizabeth. I ordered him to be tied up and taken care of, and then rode off to town. When I got into Hampstead, I saw Prince covered with mud, and running furiously, and biting at everything. I saw him bite at least a dozen dogs, two boys, and a man.

"Of course I was exceedingly alarmed, being persuaded he was mad. I tried every effort to stop him or kill him, or to drive him into some outhouse, but in vain. At last he sprang up at a boy, and seized him by the breast; happily I was near him, and knocked him off with my whip. He then set off towards London, and I rode by his side, waiting for some opportunity of stopping him. I continually spoke to him, but he paid no regard to coaxing or scolding. You may suppose I was seriously alarmed, dreading the immense mischief he might do, having seen him do so much in the few pre-

* A "gyle" is the technical name for a brewing.

† On the Evidences of the Christian Religion. See the works of John Joseph Gurney.

ceding minutes. I was terrified at the idea of his getting into Camden Town and London, and at length considering that if ever there was an occasion that justified a risk of life, this was it, I determined to catch him myself. Happily he ran up to Pryor's gate, and I threw myself from my horse upon him, and caught him by the neck: he bit at me and struggled, but without effect, and I succeeded in securing him, without his biting me. He died yesterday, raving mad.

"Was there ever a more merciful escape? Think of the children being gone! I feel it most seriously, but I cannot now write more fully. I have not been at all nervous about it, though certainly rather low, occasioned partly by this, and partly by some other things.

"I do not feel much fit for our Bible meeting on Wednesday—but I must exert myself.

"P. S.—Write me word whether Fowell has any wound on his fingers, and if he has one made by the dog, let it be cut out immediately; mind, these are my positive orders."

He afterwards mentioned some particulars which he had omitted in this hurried letter:—

"When I seized the dog," he said, "his struggles were so desperate that it seemed at first almost impossible to hold him, till I lifted him up in the air, when he was more easily managed, and I contrived to ring the bell. I was afraid that the foam, which was pouring from his mouth in his furious efforts to bite me, might get into some scratch, and do me injury; so with great difficulty, I held him with one hand, while I put the other into my pocket and forced on my glove; then I did the same with my other hand, and at last the gardener opened the door, saying, 'What do you want?' 'I've brought you a mad dog,' replied I; and telling him to get a strong chain, I walked into the yard, carrying the dog by his neck. I was determined not to kill him, as I thought if he should prove not to be mad, it would be a great satisfaction to the three persons whom he had bitten. I made the gardener, who was in a terrible fright, secure the collar round his neck and fix the other end of the chain to a tree, and then walking to its furthest range, with all my force, which was nearly exhausted by his frantic struggles, I flung him away from me, and sprang back. He made a desperate bound after me, but finding himself foiled, he uttered the most fearful yell I ever heard. All that day he did nothing but rush to and fro, champing the foam which gushed from his jaws; we threw him meat, and he snatched it with fury, but instantly dropped it again.

"The next day when I went to see him, I thought the chain seemed worn, so I pinned him to the ground between the prongs of a pitchfork, and then fixed a much larger chain round his neck; when I pulled off the fork, he sprang up and made a dash at me, which snapped the old chain in two! He died in forty-eight hours from the time he went mad."

He writes to his wife a day or two afterwards:—

"I shot all the dogs, and drowned all the cats. The man and

boys who were bitten are doing pretty well. Their wounds were immediately attended to, cut, and burnt out.

"What a terrible business it was. You must not scold me for the risk I ran; what I did I did from a conviction that it was my duty, and I never can think that an over-cautious care of self, in circumstances where your risk may preserve others, is so great a virtue as you seem to think it. I do believe that if I had shrunk from the danger, and others had suffered in consequence, I should have felt more pain than I should have done had I received a bite."

The autumn of 1816 was one of great suffering throughout the land, and in Spitalfields the silk trade was almost stagnant, and the weavers, always trembling on the brink of starvation, were plunged into the deepest misery. It was increased by the constant influx into the parish of the poorest class of London workpeople, who could find no lodging elsewhere. A soup society had been long before established, but the distress far exceeded the means provided for its alleviation. Under these circumstances it was determined to hold a meeting on the subject at the Mansion House. Mr Buxton and Mr Samuel Hoare delayed their usual visit to Norfolk, in order to explore, and assist in relieving the sufferings of the Spitalfields' poor.

TO MRS BUXTON AT EARLHAM.

"SPITALFIELDS, *November* 9, 1816.

" . . . . S. Hoare and I came from Hampstead to attend a committee this morning, and afterwards visited the poor. The wretchedness was great indeed, but I felt most compassion for a poor old creature of eighty, living alone without a fire or blanket. She seemed quite bewildered by the sight of silver; her twilight of intellect lost in gratitude and amazement. Poor old thing! that she, with all the infirmities of age, and without one earthly consolation, should look upon the prospect of a good meal as a cause of extravagant joy and real happiness, and that we, with the command of every comfort, in full strength, without a bodily want, should ever repine at trifling discomfitures, is, I hope, a lesson. We are going to have a public meeting, and I trust a profitable one, for without a large supply of money we must suspend our operations. George Kett sent me £50 to-day."

A brief extract may be given from his speech at this meeting. After mentioning the causes which had produced, he says, "a degree, an expanse of distress utterly beyond my powers to describe," he continues:—

"I could detain you till midnight with the scenes we have witnessed. From these rough minutes which I hold in my hand, taken on the spot, in the very houses of the poor, drawn not from the

fictions of a warm imagination, but from scenes of actual life—from the sad realities before us, I could disclose to you a faithful though a faint picture of such desperate calamity and unutterable ruin, that the heart must be stony indeed that did not sicken at the sight. First, I would lead you to the roof of a house hardly deserving the name of a garret; there sat three human beings, each seventy years of age—each with the ghastly lineaments of famine; a few bricks were their only chair, and their only table; a little of our soup their only provision; a little straw and some shreds of an old coat their only bed! Next, I would shew you a family of nine; the father disabled—the mother sickly—their furniture, their bed, their looms—every article of present use, the very implements of future labour, had been surrendered to the demands of hunger! I will not exhaust your feelings by further recitals of what has met our eyes, but hasten to a larger topic. . . . .

"My Lord, I feel more and more that I cannot do justice to the distress. I wish I could prevail upon you to see it with your own eyes. Come when you please, select almost your own street, almost your own house in that street, your own room in that house, and I undertake that in that room you will find a proof that our picture is faint and feeble. Come amongst us, and we will shew you the father of a large family, whom we found in the act of pulling down his stove, to exchange it for food. The dread of future cold was less violent than the cravings of immediate hunger. Come by day, and we will lead you to a widow in the last stage of illness, yet—the only blanket of the dying wretch has been sent to procure bread! Come by night, and we will shew you the baskets and the sheds of our markets filled with these wretched creatures—there they find their nightly lodging, and there amongst its scraps and refuse they pick out their daily food. . . . . In ordinary times the poor are the best friends of the poor. There is (and happy is it) a sympathy in affliction (we find it as a ray of light amid the gloom), a fellow-feeling in distress, a kind of benefit society to which all the wretched are free,—a society not, indeed, enrolled and registered by Act of Parliament, but by higher authority, and with more awful sanction, by the instincts which Providence has implanted in the human heart; but this is a virtue for better times. The poor man can hardly support himself, and therefore can hardly assist others. I do not mean to say that he does not. We have met with instances which have exalted our respect for human nature—instances which recall the widow recorded in the New Testament, who 'out of her want gave all her living;'—and the widow of Sarepta in the Old Testament, whose whole possession was 'a handful of meal in a barrel, and a drop of oil in a cruse,' yet she was willing to share them with the afflicted stranger. But if this prove that the poor are not bereft of every ordinary support, is it not a lesson to us? If the poor man who is obliged to deny his unsatiated appetites—who, having divided sufficient from his only loaf to support life, but not to satisfy hunger, hides the remainder for the next day's meal—if he yet finds some place for mercy in his soul, and, miserable himself, is yet impelled to share his remaining crust with the more miserable—if the strong

impulse of humanity urges him to so dear a sacrifice, does it not teach the man who is clothed in soft raiment and fares sumptuously every day to give something more than the crumbs that fall from his table to the wretchedness that surrounds his gate? But why this superior mercy in the poor? Because he has learned it in the school of affliction. He knows what it is to want bread, and this has opened his heart and enlivened his affections for those who are exposed to the rigour of the season and the craving importunities of hunger; but the rich man cannot feel this. He can experimentally know nothing of what it is, when the poor man, willing to strain every nerve in labour is denied the employment which might stanch the tears of his wife and appease the cries of his children—when, like the wretch I have mentioned, he is willing to suffer, if he might suffer alone, firm against his own afflictions, but when he looks around him, sunk to the effeminacy of tears."

This speech attracted very great attention. It re-appeared in publications of the most widely different character. It was republished by the Spitalfields' Benevolent Society, as the best means of creating sympathy with their exertions; it was republished by Hone and the democrats, as the best statement of the miseries permitted under the existing government; and it was republished by the friends of that government, "because," said they, "it forms so beautiful a contrast to the language of those wretched demagogues whose infamous doctrines would increase the evils they affect to deplore."

The following letter from Mr Wilberforce, the first written by him to his future ally and successor, may be deemed almost prophetic:—

"KENSINGTON GORE, *November* 28, 1816.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I must in three words express the real pleasure with which I have both read and heard of your successful effort on Tuesday last, in behalf of the hungry and the naked. . . . . But I cannot claim the merit of being influenced only by regard for the Spitalfields' sufferers in the pleasure I have received from your performances at the meeting. It is partly a selfish feeling, for I anticipate the success of the efforts which I trust you will one day make in other instances, in an assembly in which I trust we shall be fellow-labourers, both in the motives by which we are actuated and in the objects to which our exertions will be directed.—I am, my dear sir, yours sincerely, W. WILBERFORCE."

"By this one meeting at the Mansion House," says the report of the Spitalfields' Benevolent Society, "£43,369 were raised." Two days after it had been held, Lord Sidmouth sent for Mr Buxton, to inform him, that "the Prince had been so pleased by the spirit and temper of the

meeting, and so strongly felt the claims that had been urged, that he had sent them £5000."

With these exertions for the poor around him, Mr Buxton's public career may be said to have commenced. He was now launched upon that stream of labour for the good of others, along which his course lay for the remainder of his life. His letters shew the eagerness of his desire to be employing his energies in warring against the evils around him. "I want to be living in a higher key," he remarked, "to do some good before I die." His prayers were incessant that God would employ him as an instrument of spreading His kingdom, and of doing good to mankind. He had great delight in the service of his Lord and Master; nor did he ever forget to thank God with deep gratitude when any opportunity, however trifling, was afforded him of exerting himself for others. To one of his relations, who had entered upon a benevolent undertaking which required considerable personal sacrifices, he writes :—

"For my part, I cannot lament for and pity those who make great sacrifices in compliance with conscience; such dedication of self is, in my view, much more a matter of envy. Assuredly, if we could look at such sacrifices throughout their whole extent, in their consequences here to others, and hereafter to ourselves, we should perceive that the permission to be so engaged is a privilege of inestimable value. I am certain that you are only actuated by a conviction of duty, and shall I repine and grieve because you are enabled to follow so high a director? Or shall I not rather heartily rejoice that you are called to such a service, and that the call is not resisted? I often think of those verses in the Acts, 'rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name; and daily in the Temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ.' And so I am half inclined to envy you, and more than half to wish that, somehow or other, I were as well engaged."

It was no part of his character to indulge in vague desires without a bold struggle for their accomplishment. Having done what he could in relieving the miseries of his poor neighbours, he soon entered upon a wider field of benevolence.

One day, while walking past Newgate with Mr Samuel Hoare, their conversation turned upon the exertions of their sister-in-law, Mrs Fry, and her companions, for the improvement of the prisoners within its walls; and this suggested the idea of employing themselves in a similar manner. They soon entered into communication with Mr William

Crawford, Mr Peter Bedford, and other gentlemen, who were also anxious to improve the condition, at that time deplorable to the last degree, of the English jails.

The exertions of Mrs Fry and her associates had prepared the way; public attention had been drawn to the subject; and in 1816, the Society for the Reformation of Prison Discipline was formed. In the list of the committee, Mr Buxton's name stands between those of Dr Lushington and Lord Suffield, (then the Hon. E. Harbord,) both of whom were afterwards so closely associated with him in the attack upon negro slavery.

On January the 5th, 1817, he writes from Hampstead to Mrs Buxton:—

"After I had written to you yesterday, I went with Peter Bedford and Charles on a visit to Newgate. I saw four poor creatures who are to be executed on Tuesday next. Poor things, God have mercy on them! The sight of them was sufficient for that day. I felt no further inclination to examine the prison. It has made me long much that my life may not pass quite uselessly; but that, in some shape or other, I may assist in checking and diminishing crime and its consequent misery. Surely it is in the power of all to do something in the service of their Master; and surely I among the rest, if I were now to begin and endeavour, to the best of my capacity, to serve Him, might be the means of good to some of my fellow-creatures. This capacity is, I feel, no mean talent, and attended with no inconsiderable responsibility. I must pray that I may at length stir myself up, and be enabled to feel somewhat of the real spirit of a missionary, and that I may devote myself, my influence, my time, and, above all, my affections, to the honour of God, and the happiness of man. My mission is evidently not abroad, but it is not less a mission on that account. I feel that I may journey through life by two very different paths, and that the time is now come for choosing which I will pursue. I may go on, as I have been going on, not absolutely forgetful of futurity, nor absolutely devoted to it. I may get riches and repute, and gratify my ambition, and do some good and more evil; and, at length, I shall find all my time on earth expended, and in retracing my life I shall see little but occasions lost, and capacities misapplied. The other is a path of more labour and less indulgence. I may become a real soldier of Christ; I may feel that I have no business on earth but to do His will and to walk in His ways, and I may direct every energy I have to the service of others. Of these paths, I know which I would most gladly choose: 'but what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I.' In short, the cares, and the pleasures, and the business of this world, choke the good seed, and we are perpetually deceived. We would sow to the spirit, and we sow to the flesh; we desire heaven, and we are chained to earth."

He now began to entertain thoughts of entering Parliament, and at the election of February 1817, he went down to Weymouth, at the invitation of Mr W. Williams, to stand on the same interest. He did not, however, offer himself as a candidate.

"WEYMOUTH, *February* 1817.

"I am far from regretting that I came, as I do not doubt it will secure me an independent seat next election: that word 'independent,' has been the obstacle upon this occasion. I intend to spend a good portion of the next two years in preparation for the House. I hope I shall either do good, or receive pleasure, when I get there: as yet, I have had in politics neither one nor the other. I am pining for home: nothing suits me worse than this kind of busy leisure; too much to do to have time to myself, and too little to do to occupy my time."

"HAMPSTEAD, *April* 5.

"Last Sunday I was at Fakenham, with Charles, who is very unwell. God grant he may recover! I have much to thank God about with regard to him, his increased and increasing piety and seriousness. For myself, I sometimes fear my treasure is too much in my business, it is too much my amusement, the topic to which I turn with pleasure. South says, 'Whatsoever a man accounts his treasure, that he places his whole delight in; it entertains his eye, refreshes his fancy, feeds his thoughts, and affords him a continual feast.' God grant that I may so meditate in His law, and so dwell within the walls of His spiritual temple, that He, and my duties towards Him, may be my chief delight!"

Soon afterwards, he became absorbed in anxiety about his brother Charles, who had shewn symptoms of a decline, which at length proved fatal. A more grievous calamity could scarcely have befallen Mr Buxton. Though their characters stood far apart, the two brothers had some points of strong and endearing resemblance. The lively gladness of heart which threw a constant sunshine over the countenance of the younger, would often relax the graver brow of the elder brother; and, indeed, though the pressure of care and business gave Mr Buxton a habitually grave aspect, and though it was a part of his character to be so absorbed by the pursuit he had in hand, as to seem abstracted; yet there was in him throughout life a vein of playfulness which shewed itself often when least expected. Even when he himself was somewhat silent and oppressed, he courted the cheerfulness of others, and delighted in it. But the friend that could best enliven him was lost when his brother sunk into the grave.

Twenty years afterwards, in reviewing the leading occurrences of his life, he thus refers to this event:—

"I know of no tie, that of husband and wife excepted, which could be stronger than the one which united Charles and me. We were what the lawyers call 'tenants in common' of everything. He was, I think, the most agreeable person I ever knew. A kind of original humour played about his conversation. It was not wit; it was anything rather than that species of humour which provokes loud laughter; it was not exactly naïveté, though that comes nearest to it; it was an intellectual playfulness which provided for every hour, and extracted from every incident a fund of delicate merriment. He died at Weymouth in the year 1817;—and Thou knowest, O Lord, and Thou only, how deeply I loved, and how long and how intensely I lamented him."

His brother's widow and children were the objects of his tender care. He took a house for them near his own at Hampstead, and as his brother-in-law, Mr Samuel Hoare, resided in the same place, the three families became united in habits of the closest intercourse.

In the winter of 1817, Mr and Mrs Buxton, and Mr S. and Mr J. J. Gurney, went over to France, with the Rev. Francis Cunningham, who was anxious to establish a branch of the Bible Society at Paris. Mr Buxton and his brothers-in-law took a great interest in this undertaking, and were also desirous to procure information as to the excellent systems of prison discipline adopted in the jails of Antwerp and Ghent. He then examined minutely into the state of the London jails, and, to use his own expression, his inquiries developed a system of folly and wickedness which surpassed all belief. In the following year he published a work, entitled, "An Inquiry whether Crime be Produced or Prevented by our present System of Prison Discipline." The book was received with a degree of attention to which he had never aspired, running through six editions in the course of the first year; and a very considerable impulse was given to the general feeling upon the subject of which it treated. The work was thus alluded to in the House of Commons by Sir James Mackintosh:—

"The question of our penal code, as relating to prison abuses, has been lately brought home to the feelings of every man in the country by a work so full of profound information, of such great ability, of such chaste and commanding eloquence, as to give that House and the country a firm assurance that its author could not embark in any undertaking which would not reflect equal credit upon himself and upon the object of his labours."

Mr Wilberforce wrote to him on the same subject, and,

after warmly congratulating him on the weight it appeared to carry, he adds:—

"May it please God to continue to animate you with as much benevolent zeal, and to direct it to worthy objects. I hope you will come soon into Parliament, and be able to contend in person, as well as with your pen, for the rights and happiness of the oppressed and the friendless. I claim you as an ally in this blessed league."

The good effects of this book were not confined to England: it was translated into French, and distributed on the Continent. It even reached Turkey; and in India, a gentleman of the name of Blair, having chanced to read it, was induced to examine into the state of the Madras jails. He found them in a wretched condition, and did not rest till a complete reformation had been effected.

CHAPTER VI.

1818, 1819.

He closed the year 1817 with the following reflections in his commonplace book:—

"This year has been chequered with events of deep interest—some joyful, and some dressed in the darkest sable. But how encouraging is it to be able to recognise in all, and especially in the mournful circumstances of the year, the hand of a merciful Providence! This day last year I spent with my beloved brother; together we went to our usual place of worship, to hear our (especially his) beloved minister, and together we wandered through the future.

'But God has wisely hid from human eyes
The dark decrees of Fate.'

"Very soon afterwards, I was called to Weymouth to the election. I need not now enter into the reasons which induced me not to stand; suffice it to say, I would not be dependent. With my determination I have been well satisfied. I fancy my election at a future period is very probable. If it will tend to my real good or the good of others, I believe it will be so determined by Providence; if not, I earnestly pray God to avert the fulfilment of my wishes. I am too well aware of my own blindness, to have my heart much set on it. . . . . While I was at Weymouth, my sweet boy, Harry, got through the bars of his nursery window, and was discovered merely holding by his hands with the utmost unconcern. What was not his mother—what was not I spared! . . . . What shall I render to the Lord for all His mercies to me, of which (next to His inestimable love in the redemption of the world) my wife is far the greatest. . . . . I often wonder at the goodness of God in giving to one so unworthy so rich a treasure.

"Soon after my return from Weymouth began the heaviest affliction of my life—the illness, the gradual and perceptible decay, alas! the

death, of my dearest brother. No day passes in which something or other does not recall his beloved image, his lively manners, his unity of heart. I trust that few days pass in which I forget to thank God for this dispensation, and to rejoice that he has, as I doubt not he has, 'for this corruptible put on incorruption.'

"His widow and her three children have been staying with us for some time—much to my comfort, and, I hope, somewhat to hers. I have read and heard of acts of faithful affection; but I never heard, or read, or saw anything to compare with the affection, kindness, attention, and generosity displayed by S. Hoare to her.

"On Saturday last, in consequence of an almost obsolete promise to sleep in town when all the other partners were absent, I slept at Brick Lane. S. Hoare had complained to me that several of our men were employed on the Sunday. To inquire into this, in the morning I went into the brew-house, and was led to the examination of a vat containing 170 tons' weight of beer. I found it in what I considered a dangerous situation, and I intended to have it repaired the next morning. I did not anticipate any immediate danger, as it had stood so long. When I got to Wheeler Street Chapel, I did as I usually do in cases of difficulty—I craved the direction of my heavenly Friend, who will give rest to the burdened, and instruction to the ignorant.

"From that moment I became very uneasy, and instead of proceeding to Hampstead, as I had intended, I returned to Brick Lane. On examination I saw, or thought I saw, a still further declension of the iron pillars which supported this immense weight; so I sent for a surveyor; but before he came, I became apprehensive of immediate danger, and ordered the beer, though in a state of fermentation, to be let out. When he arrived, he gave it as his decided opinion that the vat was actually sinking, that it was not secure for five minutes, and that if we had not emptied it, it would probably have fallen. Its fall would have knocked down our steam-engine, coppers, roof, with two great iron reservoirs full of water—in fact, the whole brewery.

"How the new year may pass, who can tell? I may not see the end of it; but these are the active objects I propose for myself:—

To write a pamphlet on Prison Discipline.
To establish a Savings' Bank in Spitalfields.
To recommence the sale of salt fish in Spitalfields.
To attend to the London Hospital, and to endeavour to make the clergyman perform his duties, or to get him superseded.
To establish a new Bible Association.

"May the grace of God assist me in these objects; may He sanctify my motives, and guard me from pride, and may I use my utmost exertions, making His will mine!"

In the spring of 1818, a dissolution of Parliament took place, and Mr Buxton now offered himself as a candidate for Weymouth. "It appears to me," he said, "to be the sphere in which I could do most for my Master's service, but I am perfectly willing to fill a lower place. It is only

that I shall be as a common soldier instead of an officer: if I can but serve Him, let Him choose what work I shall do." While upon his canvass, he thus writes from Bellfield :—

"*June* 4.

"I think we shall have a contest and a sharp one, and the result is doubtful; however, I am very comfortable, and not at all anxious. If it is right for me to succeed, I do not doubt I shall, and if it is not right, I hope I shall not. I should return to privacy and the dear enjoyments of my own family without disappointment or vexation, and I think personally as well content with little as with great things. Joseph, in our ride from Hampstead to London, mentioned a text which has been a very comfortable companion to me. 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths.' This text, and another, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose heart is stayed on Thee,' are constantly in my thoughts. My continual prayer is, that the Lord would work that termination which His infinite wisdom knows to be the best; which is, I think, very probably praying against my own success."

"*June* 8.

"I am easy in my mind, leaving the event to Him who knows whether the busy engagements of a public life will draw me nearer to, or separate me further from Him; and who also knows whether He chooses me as an instrument of good; and if He does, He will bring the means used to a successful issue."

Four days before the election terminated, he writes :—

"*June* 26, 1818.

"I am very nearly sick of the bustle, and my expectations of success are considerably diminished this morning; but this is only my own opinion. I am exceedingly popular with my party, except as to one point. We (that is, the party, for I have had nothing to do with it) have made some most bitter attacks upon Sir —— —— for his conduct in Spain. But when I heard from a private friend of his, that he was quite sunk and wretched, I expressed in my speech yesterday the disdain I felt at promoting my cause by slander, and said, that as he had been acquitted by a competent tribunal, he must be considered as innocent. The violence of my party could hardly bear this, and for the first time they gave some indications of disapprobation. I told them plainly that I would do what I considered an act of public justice, though it offended every friend I had in the town."

TO MRS BUXTON. "*June* 29, 1818.

"The election is over. I am now going to the Hall to return thanks to my constituents. And so I am a member of Parliament. Well, I have not yet wished to decide the matter myself. My only feeling has been, if it is right, I trust it will take place; and if not, I equally trust it will be prevented. I wish you were here to see me chaired. The town is in an uproar. The bugle-horn is at this moment playing, and hundreds of persons are collected on the Esplanade. Everybody has blue ribbons. I hope the children at Hampstead wear them."

TO MRS BUXTON.

"HAMPSTEAD, *December* 6, 1818.

". . . . I have passed a remarkably comfortable Sunday; after breakfast I sat down to Law's 'Spirit of Prayer.' I wonder why his writings are not more popular; there is about them a warmth and a liveliness of persuasion, combined with a force of reason, which makes them very attractive to me. We then went to Wheeler Chapel, where Mr Pratt gave us one of his best sermons. I dare say any other person of the party would have complained of their distractions if they had only been as attentive as I was; but compared with myself in general, I had my mind much fixed on the service, and was much struck with many things in the prayer-book which I have read a thousand times without notice. S. Hoare and I stayed the sacrament, which I entered into more I think than I ever did before. When I returned to my seat, I went through a kind of service of prayer, which I by practice have formed: first, for myself, that I may press forward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of Christ, and that I may be enabled to count all things but loss in comparison; next, that I may be led to useful objects, that I may be allowed to do something for the service of mankind; then, that my motives in this may be cleansed and purified, and that I may act as unto the Lord and not unto men; next, for protection and health, and the blessings of this life, that is, if they are to conduce to my good, for I am afraid to ask for anything absolutely. . . . . The point, however, which has been all day most upon my mind, is a desire that I may work for others in Christ; that is, that His Spirit may actuate me to do what good I can, that I may have the high privilege of being His servant, and that the performance of His will, and not the applause of man, may be the wages I seek. This verse has been very forcibly before my mind: —'Never turn away thy face from any poor man, and then the Lord will never turn away His face from thee.'"

"*December* 9.

"I rode to Upton to breakfast this morning, since which I have been engaged in some important calculations. These, however, have been interrupted by a visit from the manager of the Friar's Mount School. He gives the most satisfactory account of the expenditure of the money I raised for them last year: two new schools have been established, and two, which were about to be given up, are revived. He has formed a plan by which six thousand children, now uneducated, will be instructed. The money is all that is wanting, viz., £4500, and I think I shall try. You will suppose I am mad, but this is not the case. Certainly nothing of a charitable nature, in which I have ever been engaged, has given me so much satisfaction as these Sunday-schools; and I feel, I hope, some gratitude for the great favour of being allowed to be an instrument of good to some hundreds of children during the past year. I never think of these schools without pleasure.—With dearest love to you and the children, and with a joyful heart at the expectation of meeting you and them, yours, "T. F. BUXTON."

It will be remembered that at the commencement of the

year 1818, he had determined to carry out several plans for the benefit of the poor in Spitalfields, and for other purposes of a similar character. In a paper written on New-Year's day, 1819, he enters very fully into the details of his exertions on each of the five tasks he had set himself, not one of which had been neglected. The first of them had been "to write a pamphlet on prison discipline," and after alluding to the unexpected success of his work on that subject, he adds :—

"It has excited a spirit of inquiry on the subject, which I trust will do much good. I only hope that what has benefited others has not injured *me*. I cannot render myself insensible to the applause it has received. In my heart, however, I know that it is no work of mine, but that the Lord has been pleased, in great mercy, to make me one of His instruments in this work. Lord, I entreat Thee, in this and in all things, to purify my motives, and to enable me to act as unto Thee, and not unto man! Oh, guard my heart from the delusions of vanity! Make me to know how frail and powerless I am in myself, and to cherish with gratitude, but with humility, the inestimable privilege of being in any way Thy servant!"

The paper closes with the following reflections upon the burden of responsibility which he had lately undertaken. It is interesting to see in what spirit he entered that arena, on which he was for twenty years to fight the battle of the oppressed :—

"Now that I am a member of Parliament, I feel earnest for the honest, diligent, and conscientious discharge of the duty I have undertaken. My prayer is for the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, that, free from views of gain or popularity,—that, careless of all things but fidelity to my trust, I may be enabled to do some good to my country, and something for mankind, especially in their most important concerns. I feel the responsibility of the situation, and its many temptations. On the other hand, I see the vast good which one individual may do. May God preserve me from the snares which may surround me; keep me from the power of personal motives, from interest or passion, or prejudice or ambition, and so enlarge my heart to feel the sorrows of the wretched, the miserable condition of the guilty and the ignorant, that I may 'never turn my face from any poor man;' and so enlighten my understanding, that I may be a capable and resolute champion for those who want and deserve a friend!"

Upon first taking his seat in Parliament, his attention was exclusively directed to the different forms of judicial punishment. In the beginning of 1819, he took part in two or three debates upon the subject of convict transport-ships, the state of which was proved by Mr Bennett and

other members to be horrible in the last degree; still the reformation of prisons was the subject nearest to his heart.

On the 1st of March, Lord Castlereagh's motion for a committee to inquire into the state of Prison Discipline was carried; and on the next evening, a motion for a committee on the Criminal Laws was made by Sir James Mackintosh, and seconded by Mr Buxton, whose speech met with success abundantly sufficient to dispel his fears of uselessness in the House of Commons.

TO J. J. GURNEY, ESQ.

"BRICK LANE, *March* 4, 1819.

"Well, the effort is over. Last night came on the grand question. I spoke for nearly an hour. I was low and dispirited, and much tired (bodily) when I rose. I cannot say I pleased myself. I could not, at first, get that freedom of language which is so essential, but I rose with the cheers of the House, and contrived to give much of what was on my mind. Everybody seems to have taken a more favourable opinion of the speech than I did. The facts were irresistible; and, for fear of tiring my auditors, I confined myself principally to facts. You will see by the papers that we obtained a victory. As for myself, I hope I did force myself into something like indifference to my own success, provided the cause succeeded."

At the close of the debate, many of the most distinguished members of the House came up and introduced themselves to him; Mr S. Hoare sat under the gallery watching with delight the success of his friend. "I am sure," said he afterwards, "if I had been received in the House as he was, I should not have recovered from the elevating effect of it for twenty years."

But the opinion of an impartial observer may be more valuable. Mr W. Smith (M.P. for Norwich) writes to Mr J. J. Gurney:—

"You will see the result of last night's debate by the papers. Buxton acquitted himself to universal satisfaction. The House is prepared to receive him with respect and kindness; and his sterling sense, his good language, and his earnest manner, fully keep up the prepossession in his favour, so that I recollect very few who have made their *début* with so much real advantage, and seem so likely to maintain the station thus early assumed."

In accordance with the motions of the 1st and 3d of March, two select committees were appointed, in both of which Mr Buxton was included. The one was to inquire into the feasibility of mitigating the penal code, of which he writes, March 11, 1819:—

"I conjecture that no man on the committee goes so far as I go —namely, to the abolition of the punishment of death, except for murder; but all go a very great way, and if we merely make forgery, sheep and horse stealing, not capital, it is an annual saving of thirty lives, which is something, and satisfies me in devoting my time to the subject. I am confident that our opinions on prisons and criminal law will ultimately prevail; in short I am in high spirits on the whole matter."

The other committee was appointed to examine the state of jails throughout the kingdom; and here we may briefly state the final result of the exertions made for the improvement of Prison Discipline. The committee published its first report in 1820, and the government was thereby induced to bring in a bill for consolidating and amending the prison laws then in existence. This bill was referred for revision to a select committee, of which Mr Buxton was a member.

"You will be delighted," he writes soon afterwards to a friend, "to hear that the Prison Bill is going on wonderfully well, beyond all expectation. I made a speech the first day, stating the principles on which I thought we ought to proceed, and the committee have subsequently adopted almost all of them; so that I do believe that this part of the business of my life will be done effectually."

After much patient investigation, a bill was prepared by the committee, and immediately adopted by the two Houses of Parliament; and thus the English jails, instead of remaining "the nurseries and hot-beds of crime, the almost inevitable ruin of all who entered within their walls," have become, generally speaking, places where the improvement, as well as the punishment, of the criminal is attempted. Perfection, of course, is not yet attained; the new system has been of no avail in those prisons where exertions have not been used to enforce it: but no man can read the descriptions of the state of jails, from twenty-five to thirty years ago, and compare them with those of the present day, without being astonished at the extent of the evil and of the reform.

TO J. H. NORTH, ESQ. "*April* 19, 1819.

"A report has reached me that you are likely to get a seat in Parliament. Is there a bit of truth in it? Is there the remotest probability of so joyful an event? Pray do not conceal it from me a moment, for I speak only truth when I say it would materially add to my happiness. I have plenty of acquaintances, but hardly a familiar friend in the House, and this is a very needful thing. I much want some one with whom I can freely communicate, and who would honestly tell me when I am right and when I am in error; and I need not tell you how fully my wishes would be satisfied, if we were there together. Perhaps you will like to hear

the impression the House makes upon me. I do not wonder that so many distinguished men have failed in it. The speaking required is of a very peculiar kind: the House loves *good sense and joking*, and nothing else; and the object of its utter aversion is that species of eloquence which may be called Philippian. There are not three men from whom a fine simile or sentiment would be tolerated; all attempts of the kind are punished with general laughter. An easy flow of sterling, forcible, plain sense is indispensable; and this, combined with great powers of sarcasm, gives Brougham his station. Canning is an exception to this rule. His reasoning is seldom above mediocrity; but then, it is recommended by language so wonderfully happy, by a manner so exquisitely elegant, and by wit so clear, so pungent, and so unpremeditated, that he contrives to beguile the House of its austerity. Tierney has never exerted himself much in my hearing. Wilberforce has more native eloquence than any of them, but he takes no pains, and allows himself to wander from his subject: he holds a very high rank in the estimation of the House.

"And now let me tell you a secret: these great creatures turn out, when viewed closely, to be but men, and men with whom *you* need not fear competition. I again, therefore, say, 'Come among us,' and I shall be greatly deceived if you do not hold a foremost place.

"My line is distinctly drawn. I care but little about party politics. I vote as I like; sometimes *pro*, and sometimes *con.*; but I feel the greatest interest on subjects such as the slave trade, the condition of the poor, prisons, and criminal law: to these I devote myself, and should be quite content never to give another vote upon a party question. I am upon the Jail and Criminal Law committees, and devote three mornings in the week to one, and three to the other; so I am contented, and feel as little inclination, as ability, to engage in political contentions. My body is strong enough, but any stress upon my mind, just now, deranges me instantly. 'Indolent vacuity of thought' is my only remedy; but it is not a very convenient medicine for one who has such a multitude of engagements. How fares the law? Is Ireland blessed with abundant litigation, or does poverty deny this, the chief of luxuries?"

TO MRS BUXTON.

"WEYMOUTH, *August* 15, 1819.

"Here I am continually in the air, and certainly have already found the benefit of it. I rode this morning for two hours on the Wyke sands before breakfast. I have determined not to canvass, but to be constantly walking about: the worst of it is, I do not know above a third of their faces, and the names of about one in a hundred, so I am in momentary danger of grasping the hand, and inquiring with the kindest solicitude after the welfare of the wife and family of a man who never saw Weymouth before in his life. . . . . Weymouth is a striking place in one respect; it brings me into contact with some whose course is nothing short of tremendous, and this trying question always recurs: 'You know better things; by mercy you have been led into other society, and the truth has been discovered to your judgment upon the comparison of this world and eternity; then is your course as much superior to theirs as your

light is—in short, with all the instruction and knowledge given you, are you seeking heaven with your whole heart?'"

In November the riot which had taken place at Manchester, and the severe measures to which the magistrates of that city had resorted, were brought before Parliament.

TO J. J. GURNEY, ESQ.

"*November* 25, 1819.

"I must give you a line to tell you how things have gone on in the House. We have had a wonderful debate; really it has raised my idea of the capacity and ingenuity of the human mind. All the leaders spoke, and almost all outdid themselves. But Burdett stands first; his speech was absolutely the finest, and the clearest, and the fairest display of masterly understanding that ever I heard; and with shame I ought to confess it, he did not utter a sentence to which I could not agree. Canning was second; if there be any difference between eloquence and sense, this was the difference between him and Burdett. He was exquisitely eloquent, and kept the tide of reason and argument, irony, joke, invective, and declamation flowing, without abatement, for nearly three hours. Plunkett was third; he took hold of poor Mackintosh's argument, and griped it to death; ingenious, subtle, yet clear and bold, and putting with the most logical distinctness to the House the errors of his antagonist. Next came Brougham—and what do you think of a debate in which the fourth man could keep alive the attention of the House from three to five in the morning, after a twelve hours' debate. Now, what was the impression made on my mind? you will ask. First, I voted with ministers, because I cannot bring myself to subject the Manchester magistrates to a parliamentary inquiry; but nothing has shaken my convictions that the magistrates, ministers, and all, have done exceedingly wrong. I am clear I voted right; and, indeed, I never need have any doubts when I vote with ministers, the bias being on the other side. Did the debate inflame my ambition? Why, in one sense, it did. It convinced me that I have the opportunity of being a competitor on the greatest arena that ever existed; but it also taught me that success in such a theatre is only for those who will devote their lives to it. Perhaps you will admire the presumption which entertains even the possibility of success. I am, I believe, rather absurd; but I hold a doctrine to which I owe, not much, indeed, but all the little success I ever had,—viz., that with ordinary talents and extraordinary perseverance all things are attainable. And give me ten years in age, ten times my constitution, and oblivion of the truth which paralyses many an exertion of mine, that 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' and especially that fame is so, —I say, give me these things, and I should not despair of parliamentary reputation; but to one who cannot bear fatigue of mind, who loves sporting better than glory, who will not enlist under the banners of party,—to such a being fame is absolutely forbidden. I am well content; I cannot expect the commodity for which I will not pay the price.

"So far I scribbled yesterday, and then I went to the levée. . . . . The rooms were tolerably splendid; but, upon the whole, I never

was less attracted by anything than courtiership, and would not be obliged to attend regularly for all the ribbons of all the colours of the rainbow. At dinner, afterwards, I had a great deal of conversation with the two Grants, Denman, and the Attorney-General, and then I went home with Wilberforce, and spent a most pleasant evening. His family prayers were nothing short of delightful. I hope I shall see him a good deal while I am in town.

"P.S.—Bootle Wilbraham (who is a Lancaster magistrate) was defending his brethren in the debate, but did it in so low a tone of voice that nobody could hear him; somebody whispered about that *he was reading the Riot Act.*"

The following letter was addressed to his sister, Mrs Forster, whose husband was preparing to go to America, on what the Society of Friends term "a religious visit" to the members of their community:—

"EARLHAM, 1819.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—Your letter has been much upon my mind, and has raised a variety of feelings. The first impression was one of much sorrow, that your plans and prospects of home-happiness should be interrupted, and for so long a time; but I must confess, I have been speedily almost reconciled to it; that is, I have brought it home to my own mind, and have considered, whether it would not really be the greatest of blessings, if by any means my duty would call me to such a sacrifice, and the call were not to be disobeyed. After all, it is a noble thing—it is the noblest of all things—to be permitted to be a servant of the Infinite Ruler of the world; and how low and earthly is that wisdom which could prefer any delights, before the delights of such self-dedication! We know but few things for certain; but this is one of them—a promise is given to him who leaves father or mother, or wife or children, for Christ's sake. How can I mourn, then, that William should accept the terms of such a promise? I rejoice that he is counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. I have always felt particularly interested with the vision of the man of Macedonia, calling Paul to come over and help them, comparing it with the Epistle to the Philippians. The discouragements at first were so great, and yet the Epistle describes such an abundant and happy produce. Who can tell how many may have eternal reason to rejoice at the obedience of the apostle; and who can presume to limit the effect which Providence may please to produce by William's visit? We may differ on some points, but not on this—that his call is from above. I am persuaded it has been sought in the right spirit. I believe it is sent in mercy to others—in eminent mercy to him and to you; and I am willing that you should undergo the pains of separation. But, my dear Anna, you must not imagine I am indifferent about this. Let me ask, Have you determined to remain behind? I do not give an opinion upon the subject. All I wish to express is, that you must not stay from motives of economy. . . . . Of course, we shall see you before his departure. I will hear of nothing else. With love to you both, and not without thankfulness that there is something of a missionary spirit among you, I am, your affectionate brother, "T. F. BUXTON."

CHAPTER VII.

1820, 1821.

At the commencement of the year 1820, Mr Buxton thus enumerates the subjects which he hoped to accomplish in the course of the year:—"First, to assist, to the best of my ability, in Parliament, to amend our criminal code; and, secondly, to amend our prisons. Thirdly, to obtain a return of the number of widows who burn themselves at their husbands' funeral in India, preparatory to a law prohibiting such enormities. Fourthly, to establish a fund for supporting the Sunday schools (on the plan of that at Friar's Mount) in Spitalfields."

The death of the King, and the consequent prospect of a dissolution of Parliament, occasioned some anxious thoughts. "I have felt some doubt," he says, on the 6th of February, "whether I should stand;" and he mentions his "eight children," among the reasons against doing so. He adds:—

"Lord, guide my heart and will aright, and lead me to determine for the best! Oh that I could from this day offer myself a living sacrifice to the Lord, doing or abstaining, speaking or being silent, spending or forbearing to spend, simply because it was the will of God!

"Oh that I could thus put off the old man and put on the new man! I think the time that is past should suffice me to have wrought my own will; and for the future, let me try all things by this standard, 'Is it the will of God?' O gracious God! this is what I would be; but what am I? Is one hundredth part of my time, talents, money, strength, spent for God? No!"

He determined at length to stand again for Weymouth. He was successful, and after announcing his re-election, he proceeds:—"I heartily hope I may make some good use of my present privilege, and that some of the oppressed may be less miserable in consequence."

Thus far Mr Buxton's career had been one of almost unchequered prosperity—as a member of Parliament; as a man of business; as a husband; as the father of a large and promising family, his heart's desires had been fulfilled. His public undertakings were becoming daily more important and engrossing, and his home was a scene of unclouded happiness.

His valued friend, the Rev. Charles Simeon, thus writes to him from Cambridge:—

"*January* 14, 1820.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Certainly if I should live to visit your house again, I shall do it with with no little joy, for I do not expect to see in this world a brighter image of heaven, than I was there privileged to behold. A sweet savour of love remained upon my spirit for a long time after, and I am not sure that it is quite evaporated yet. But I do not know that I shall not thrash you for supporting the Radicals. I look to you, under God, to be an instrument of great good in the House of Commons; and I would not that you should subvert the influence which your habits and talents are so calculated to command. . . . . I am no politician; but I feel a regard for you, and seem to think that the more I know of you, the more my heart will be knit to you; so you must bear with this impudent letter, from one who is, with no common affection, yours,

"CHARLES SIMEON."

But all this happiness was about to be marred by a rapid succession of calamities. Mr Buxton had been hastily summoned back from the election, in consequence of the alarming illness of one of his children. His eldest son, a boy of ten years old, had been sent home from school unwell, but no suspicion of danger was at first excited; his disorder, however, proved to be inflammatory; and, in the course of a very few days, he sank under it. His father writes in his journal:—

"Thus have we lost our eldest son, the peculiar object of our anxious care; a boy of great life and animation; of a most beautiful countenance; of a most sweet disposition: and, blessed be God, we feel that in the whole event His mercy has been extended to us. We can rejoice and mourn together,—mourn at our loss, and rejoice that, without exposure to the trials and temptations of the world, it has pleased God to take him to Himself. We feel the most certain assurance that he is with God, and we feel persuaded that, if we could but be permitted to see him as he now is, we should never bewail him for another instant."

His faith was destined to be more severely tried. The younger children, who were already suffering from the hooping-cough, were seized within a few days with the measles. He writes:—

"*April* 9.

"This week has passed away in great anxiety for the remainder of my flock."

"*Sunday night, April* 16.

"How wonderful are the ways of the Lord; how sweet His mercies; how terrible His judgments! The week past has been one of the most acute anxiety. Oh! when one affliction flows in upon us after another, may they burst the bonds by which we are tied to earth, may they direct us heavenward, and may we, having our trea-

sures in heaven, have our hearts there also. . . . . I have just been out walking, viewing this splendid starry night; what immeasurable mightiness does the firmament display! And when we consider that for all these innumerable worlds there is one Arbiter, one Sovereign Director, can we say aught else than 'Thy will be done?' Cannot He who rules the universe decide what is best for the children He has lent me? May I yield to that will!"

The sacrifice was required from him, for in less than five weeks after the death of his son, it pleased God also to take the three infant daughters whose illness had excited such deep feeling. On the death of the eldest, a child of four years old, he writes:—

"'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' I had much desired her life, but willingly do I resign her into the hands of the Lord, praying Him that He would mercifully make her death the means of turning me more nearly to the Lord.

"Thus, in little more than a month," he adds, "have we lost the darlings and delights of our life; but they are in peace: and, for ourselves, we know that this affliction may redound to our eternal benefit, if we receive it aright. . . . . How are all our most choice and comely blossoms cut off; how naked do we appear, how stripped of our treasures! Oh, my God, my God! Be Thou our Consoler, and comfort us, not with the joys of this world, but with faith, love, obedience, patience, and resignation."*

"TUNBRIDGE WELLS, *May* 14, 1820.

"We came here, with the fragments of our family, on Wednesday last, in hopes that the retirement and peace of this place may recruit the strength of my beloved wife. May God give her every blessing; and, for myself, my prayer is that this trial may not pass away, but may leave a durable impression."

The diary from which this melancholy narrative has been drawn closes at this date; and, of the summer, which was chiefly spent at Tunbridge Wells, there are few notices, except that before mentioned of the passing of the Prison Discipline Bill, and an allusion, on the 8th of June, to the Queen's proposed trial:—

"Last night came on in the House the great events of the Queen, and I think I never spent an evening to so much advantage as this last. The case is this; we are going into an inquiry which will lay bare the most disgraceful scenes in the royal family on both sides; the probable consequence will be the impeachment of the Queen. The nation will be divided, and all the lower orders will be on her side; and the certain consequences, disturbances, riots, and bloodshed.

"These considerations pressed much on my mind, and I called

* "Eheu! Eheu!" was the simple epitaph he placed upon the tomb of his four children.

Wilberforce out of the House, and persuaded him to move for a delay of two days, for the purpose of preventing the necessity for such painful and disgraceful disclosures, which motion I seconded, in a short, warm, decided, and well-applauded speech; and the whole House were so much with us, that the Ministers were obliged to give way. I have been most warmly thanked by both sides. Brougham said, 'You may live fifty years, and do good every day, but you will never do as much as you have done this night.' In short, the effort succeeded beyond expectation, and I am glad that I was able to persuade Wilberforce to take so decisive a step. He wavered a good deal, but when he spoke, he spoke most beautifully, and at considerable length: his fine fancy played upon the subject."

In the autumn of 1820, Mr Buxton, who was no longer obliged to give much attention to the Brewery, and greatly needed rest and change, gave up his house at Hampstead, and became a resident, permanently as it proved, in the neighbourhood of Cromer.

At first he resided at Cromer Hall, an old seat of the Windham family, which no longer exists, having many years ago been pulled down and replaced by a modern edifice. It was situated about a quarter of a mile from the sea, but sheltered from the north winds by closely surrounding hills and woods; and, with its old buttresses, gables, and porches, clothed with roses and jessamine, and its formal lawn, where the pheasants came down to feed, had a peculiar character of picturesque simplicity. The interior corresponded with its external appearance, and had little of the regularity of modern buildings; one attic-chamber was walled up, with no entrance save through the window, and, at different times, large pits were discovered under the floor, or in the thickness of the walls, used, it was supposed, in old times, by the smugglers of the coast.

Upon first settling at Cromer Hall he received under his roof Mrs Buxton's youngest sister, Priscilla Gurney, who was then in an advanced stage of consumption, under which she sank in March 1821.

This lady was a minister in the Society of Friends, like her sister Mrs Fry, whom she greatly resembled, in uniting uncommon resolution and originality of character, with the most winning gentleness of demeanour. Mr Buxton had the highest opinion of her judgment and piety; and she exercised, as we shall see, a peculiar influence upon his subsequent career. He thus describes her:—

". . . . I never knew an individual who was less one of the multitude than Priscilla Gurney. In her person, her manners, her views, there was nothing which was not the very reverse of commonplace. There was an air of peace about her, which was irresistible in reducing all with whom she conversed under her gentle influence. This was the effect on strangers; and in no degree was it abated by the closest intimacy: something there was, undoubtedly, in the beauty of her countenance, and in the extreme delicacy which constituted that beauty; in a complexion perfectly clear; in the simplicity and absence of all decoration but that of the most refined neatness, which, altogether, conveyed to every one's mind the strongest conception of purity. And these attractions of person were aided by manners which nicely corresponded. . . . . No less remarkable were the powers of her mind. I have seldom known a person of such sterling ability; and it is impossible to mention these mental powers, without adverting to that great, and, in my estimation, that astonishing display of them, which was afforded by her ministry. I have listened to many eminent preachers, and many speakers also, but I deem her as perfect a speaker as I ever heard. The tone of her voice, her beauty, the singular clearness of her conception, and, above all, her own strong conviction that she was urging the truth, and truth of the utmost importance—the whole constituted a species of ministry, which no one could hear, and which I am persuaded no one ever did hear, without a deep impression."

Whilst attending from time to time his duties in London, he thus writes to Mrs Buxton, who had remained at Cromer Hall to nurse her sister:—

"LONDON, *January* 13, 1821.

"I wrote a line yesterday just to mention my safe arrival, and to-day I have hardly time for more, for a flood of business has overtaken me. I have an engagement already for every day this week, and next week I shall have to bring forward a motion in the House, which will require some time and thought; but it is the weight and multitude of business which makes me happy. At Earlham I read a piece of Paley's philosophy, which I found admirable. I was quite delighted with the vigour of thought which runs through it, and it gave me a train of thought which lasted almost to Ipswich. . . . . I have felt very much leaving you all; but though I should enjoy being with you, I could stay no longer from parliament with an easy mind, so we must be satisfied.

"As for dearest Priscilla, I feel her given to the Lord, and I am sure that He is about her bed, and that He loves her, and, that whatsoever shall happen to her, will be sent in peculiar tenderness; and in these certain truths I commit her to Him without fear or repining. She is inexpressibly dear to my inmost soul, but I look upon her as a saint already in the hands of the Lord. . . . . I have tried to pray for her, but I cannot. My prayers turn into praises, and my mourning into joy. And, after all, if we lose her, what is it? Let our thoughts range through eternity, dropping only the

trifle of the next fifty years, and what can we desire beyond her present state? We are sure that her God, whom she served in her strength, protects, cherishes, and will guard her from evil in her sickness. If she is destined to dwell in His presence for evermore, will not this satisfy those who love her dearly? I say again, I am satisfied and joyful in her state, and can with unbounded and satisfied confidence commit her to the Lord, and shall be almost glad if you tell her I send no message of hope or fear, neither can I hope or fear."

"HAMPSTEAD, *January* 27.

"I have had my hands brimful of business this last week, but it has not fatigued me as parliamentary business does; there is no stress on the mind, no anxiety, no apprehension that a good cause may suffer by my inattention or incapacity, which is wearisome in Parliament. We had a pleasant dinner party at the Duke of Gloucester's yesterday. I had spent the morning with Wilberforce, who was quite delightful. I begin to think, that of all men he is the most subjected and controlled, and invariably in the right frame of temper. I say 'begin,' because he is beginning to share the seat in my mind which Joseph has so long occupied. . . . . I shall finish my examination of the boys when I am at Cromer, so let Miss —— tremble. Tell her from me, that I look with unmixed satisfaction to her superintendence of their education; and I am sure, if she give them vigour of mind—'a mind not to be changed,' a determination to accomplish their object by dint of resolution, and an unconquerable fixed will to succeed—she will give them what is worth more than wealth, or rank, or anything else, except one thing, which if they have not, I trust they never will have this energy, because this energy is a great instrument, and, if ill employed, a great instrument of evil."

TO ONE OF HIS LITTLE BOYS.

"*January* 28.

"I have had a fine gallop this morning on your capital horse Radical. I ride him and Abraham every day, and always as fast as they can go, because I have so much to do that I cannot behave like little Lord Linger. I hope that when you are a man, you will be very industrious and do all the good you can. There are a great many poor people who are very sick, and yet have no money to buy food, or clothes, or physic; and there are many more so ignorant that they never heard of the Bible, and think they do very right when they roast and eat their enemies! If you think this is very right, and that it is kind to stick a man on a spit and dress him like a pig, why, don't try to prevent it! But if you think it very wrong, then be sure you do all you can to stop it. Do you know, one good industrious man may do a great deal; and, if you wish to be of that sort, you must begin by being diligent now. But there is a much more important thing than even being diligent, that is, being good. I don't much like to bring you a horn, because I am sure you will disturb the hen-pheasants, and so we shall have no young ones."

Mr Buxton belonged, it has been said above, to the

African Institution, the society set on foot by Mr Wilberforce and his coadjutors, in order to watch over the law, which with so much difficulty had been obtained in 1807, abolishing the trade in slaves between Africa and our colonies. Having in a great measure effected this purpose, and secured the ostensible acquiescence of France, Portugal, and other nations, in the same measure, the institution had at length sunk into a state of comparative inactivity.

TO MRS BUXTON.

"*January* 30.

"I had been engaged to go down to Coggeshall yesterday, shoot there to-day, and return to-morrow night; happily, as I think, I got notice of the meeting of the African Institution for to-day, so I put off my shooting excursion. In the course of the meeting an opportunity occurred, which I could not pass over, of declaring my mind, as to the inactivity and ineffectiveness of the society. I told them that it was certain we once had the confidence of the country; and it was now certain the public knew little and cared little on the subject. I have often spoken plainly and been condemned by others; a few times I have done so and blamed myself, but in this instance I really felt, and still feel, exceedingly grateful that I did not shrink from the duty. My remonstrance was well received, and a meeting was appointed for Saturday next, at Lord Lansdowne's, of all the members of both Houses interested in the subject, and perhaps it may be a means of great good. I tell all this long story for my dear Priscilla, who exhorted me not to neglect this, the first and most melancholy of all subjects. I thoroughly enjoyed the dear boys' letters, but I can't think that I shall find they know so much as they talk about when I get home. My hands are rather full: Thursday, the Brewery; Friday, Cape of Good Hope Slave Trade; Saturday, Lord Lansdowne's; Monday, Prison Bill; Tuesday, Brougham's Bill on Education; Wednesday, I make a speech to the children in Spitalfields; Thursday, Brewery and Mail Coach; Friday, home!"

"*February* 3.

"I was quite astonished at Wilberforce yesterday. I had not seen him since my vehement reprobation of the African Institution. Yesterday he was warm to excess; over and over again he thanked me for the boldness and openness of my remarks, and said they had penetrated deeply into his heart."

A few days later he speaks of "working very, very hard." In addition to the questions of Prison Discipline, Criminal Law, and the Slave Trade, in which he took so much interest, his attention had been drawn, chiefly through the facts laid before him by the Rev. Mr Peggs, a Baptist missionary just returned from India, to the subject of the self-immolation of Hindoo widows. Having collected a large mass

of information, he determined to bring it before Parliament; and, in the course of the session, he made two motions on the subject. In his speech on the second occasion he proved that, within the last four years, in the residency of Fort William alone, 2366 widows had been committed to the flames!—that the French, Dutch, and other powers in India had abolished the custom in their territories, while the stigma of its continuance still rested on the British Government; and he shewed that, so far from being voluntary, this cruel martyrdom was generally forced upon the unhappy widow, either by superstitious priests or interested relations.

Several years, however, elapsed before anything of importance was accomplished in this matter, the question being one which fell within the province of the India House, rather than of the House of Commons.

The committee which had been appointed in the preceding year to inquire into the working of the Criminal Laws, had now closed its labours, and Sir James Mackintosh's bill for the abrogation of the punishment of death, in cases of forgery, arose from its report. A speech of Mr Buxton's upon this bill excited great notice at the time.

It was thus summed up at its conclusion:—

"My argument, then, is this. Our system is before us. The price we pay for our system is—the loss of public opinion, and the aid (the best, the cheapest, and the most constitutional) which the law gathers from the concurrence of public opinion; the necessity of doing that by spies, informers, and blood-money, which were better done without them; the annual liberation of multitudes of criminals; the annual perpetration of multitudes of crimes; perjury; and the utter abandonment of the first of your duties, the first of your interests, and the greatest of all charities—the prevention of crime. This is what you pay. And for what? For a system, which has against it a multitude of divines, moralists, statesmen, lawyers—an unrivalled phalanx of the wise and good; a system, which has against it the still stronger authority of practical men, who draw their conclusions from real life; a system, which has against it the still stronger authority of the Common Law of England; which, if wrong now, is wrong for the first time; a system, which has against it the still stronger authority of experience and experiment, in England, on the one hand—in Tuscany, in America, and elsewhere, on the other; and, finally, a system, which in its spirit and its temper is against the temper and the spirit of that mild and merciful religion, which 'desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live!'"

Numerous were the expressions of approbation which this speech called forth. Sir James Mackintosh said in the House, that it was "the most powerful appeal that he had ever had the good fortune to hear within the walls of Parliament." And in a subsequent debate Mr (now Lord) Denman remarked, that "more of wisdom, more of benevolence, more of practical demonstration he had never heard in the course of his parliamentary career, than was contained in the energetic speech of his honourable friend."

When, however, the division took place on the question, "That the bill for the mitigation of the punishment of death for forgery do pass," the Ayes were 115, and the Noes 121; and the bill was consequently lost!

On the 5th of June 1822, Sir James Mackintosh again brought forward the question, and was again seconded by Mr Buxton. They succeeded in carrying, by a majority of sixteen, the motion, "That the House will in the next session consider the means of increasing the efficacy of the criminal law, by abating the rigour of its punishments."

In 1823, however, the resolutions proposed by Sir James Mackintosh were rejected, and he and his friends were still struggling against a superior force, when in 1826, Mr Peel, on his accession to office, undertook the momentous task of remodelling the whole penal code, by which, at the period when first Samuel Romilly, and afterwards Sir James Mackintosh and Mr Buxton brought the subject forward, two hundred and thirty offences were punishable with death.

CHAPTER VIII.

SLAVERY. 1821–1823.

THE evening after Mr Buxton had delivered his speech on criminal law, he received the following letter from Mr Wilberforce:—

"LONDON, *May* 24, 1821.

"MY DEAR BUXTON,—It is now more than thirty-three years since, after having given notice in the House of Commons that I should bring forward, for the first time, the question concerning the Slave Trade, it pleased God to visit me with a severe indisposition, by which, indeed, I was so exhausted, that the ablest physician in London of that day declared that I had not stamina to last above a very

few weeks. On this I went to Mr Pitt, and begged of him a promise, which he kindly and readily gave me, to take upon himself the conduct of that great cause.

"I thank God I am now free from any indisposition; but from my time of life, and much more from the state of my constitution, and my inability to bear inclemencies of weather, and irregularities, which close attendance on the House of Commons often requires, I am reminded, but too intelligibly, of my being in such a state that I ought not to look confidently to my being able to carry through any business of importance in the House of Commons.

"Now for many, many years I have been longing to bring forward that great subject, the condition of the negro slaves in our Transatlantic colonies, and the best means of providing for their moral and social improvement, and ultimately for their advancement to the rank of a free peasantry—a cause this, recommended to me, or rather enforced on me, by every consideration of religion, justice, and humanity.

"Under this impression, I have been waiting, with no little solicitude, for a proper time and suitable circumstances of the country, for introducing this great business; and, latterly, for some member of Parliament, who, if I were to retire or to be laid by, would be an eligible leader in this holy enterprise.

"I have for some time been viewing you in this connexion; and after what passed last night, I can no longer forbear resorting to you, as I formerly did to Pitt, and earnestly conjuring you to take most seriously into consideration the expediency of your devoting yourself to this *blessed service*, so far as will be consistent with the due discharge of the obligations you have already contracted, and in part so admirably fulfilled, to war against the abuses of our criminal law, both in its structure and its administration. Let me, then, entreat you to form an alliance with me, that may truly be termed holy, and if I should be unable to commence the war (certainly not to be declared this session); and still more, if, when commenced, I should (as certainly would, I fear, be the case) be unable to finish it, do I entreat that you would continue to prosecute it. Your assurance to this effect would give me the greatest pleasure—pleasure is a bad term—let me rather say peace and consolation; for alas, my friend, I feel but too deeply, how little I have been duly assiduous and faithful in employing the talents committed to my stewardship; and in forming a *partnership* of this sort with you, I cannot doubt that I should be doing an act highly pleasing to God, and beneficial to my fellow-creatures. Both my head and heart are quite full to overflowing, but I must conclude. My dear friend, may it please God to bless you, both in your public and private course. If it be His will, may He render you an instrument of extensive usefulness; but above all, may He give you the disposition to say at all times, 'Lord, what wouldest thou have me to do, or to suffer?' looking to Him, through Christ, for wisdom and strength. And while active in business and fervent in spirit upon earth, may you have your conversation in heaven, and your affections set on things above. There may we at last meet, together with all we most love, and spend an eternity of

holiness and happiness complete, and unassailable.—Ever affectionately yours, W. WILBERFORCE."

Many causes had been concurring to prepare Mr Buxton for entering upon this "holy enterprise." His attention had, at an early period, been drawn, though slightly, to the questions of Slavery and the Slave Trade. In one of his private memoranda he enumerates, among the causes for thankfulness, "the strong impression on my mother's mind, transfused into mine in very early life, of the iniquity of Slavery and the Slave Trade;" and he notices a remark which she often made, "while we continue to commit such a sin, how can we ask forgiveness of our sins?" He mentions also, that he used to ridicule his eldest sister for refusing to eat slave-grown sugar; "but," he adds, "her doing so made me think. Singular, too, that my first speech on entering college was upon the Slave Trade, and my first speech on entering life was at the Tower Hamlets, on the same subject."

We have seen that he had become an active member of the African Institution; and although that body devoted its attention to the Slave Trade alone, and did not take up the kindred question of Slavery, yet his connexion with it no doubt contributed to turn his mind to the varied sufferings of the negro race.

The reader need scarcely be reminded, that the importation of fresh negroes from Africa to our colonies had been declared illegal in 1807, after a twenty years' struggle on the part of Mr Wilberforce, Mr Stephen, Mr Clarkson, and their distinguished coadjutors; and England had no sooner abolished her own trade, than with characteristic energy she strove to obtain, by persuasion or by purchase, a similar measure from the other European powers. Whilst, however, the British *Slave Trade* had been abolished, British *Slavery* remained. Though no fresh negroes could now be introduced into our colonies, yet those who had been already imported were still held in bondage. It is singular how often the Slave Trade is confounded with Slavery, even in quarters where such a blunder would be least expected.

There were various reasons which prevented those who had effected the abolition of the Slave Trade from attempt-

ing also the emancipation of the Slaves;* but we see, in Mr Wilberforce's letter, that the latter was a subject which constantly weighed upon his mind, and filled him with painful solicitude.

When Mr Buxton first entered Parliament, his attention was drawn to this question by a letter from his brother-in-law, Mr William Forster, who, after describing the interest taken by Mr Buxton's friends in his efforts for the improvement of prison discipline, expresses their earnest desire that he would "take up another most important and extensive question, the state of Africa, and of the slave population in the West Indies." "The attention and exertions of the wise and good," proceeds Mr Forster, "have been directed, and, through the Divine blessing, not without much success, towards staying the progress of evil, in the abolition of the Slave Trade; but now it is certainly time to turn the mind of the British public towards the situation of those in actual slavery."

Another circumstance, to which Mr Buxton often referred, had prepared his mind for accepting the proffered advocacy of the anti-slavery cause. He thus mentions it in a letter, dated October 22, 1821:—

"Two or three days before Priscilla Gurney died, she sent for me, as desiring to speak to me about something of importance. The moment she began to speak she was seized with a convulsion of coughing, which continued for a long time, racking her feeble frame. She still seemed determined to persevere, but, at length, finding all strength exhausted, she pressed my hand and said, 'The poor, dear slaves!' I could not but understand her meaning, for during her illness she had repeatedly urged me to make their cause and condition the first object of my life, feeling nothing so heavy on her heart as their sufferings."

It was not, however, till after long and mature deliberation, that he accepted the weighty charge involved in Mr Wilberforce's proposal. Indeed, he does not appear to have fully resolved upon undertaking it till a year and a half after the receipt of Mr Wilberforce's letter; but he spent the interval, as far as his other avocations would permit him, in a close study of the question in all its bearings. In this he was materially assisted by the present of a large collection of books connected with the subject from

* In 1807, Earl Percy (afterwards Duke of Northumberland) proposed the emancipation of the negro children, but without effect.

Mr Hoare, one of the earliest members of the African Institution.

Many of his other friends encouraged him to enter upon this arduous undertaking, especially Mr Samuel and Mr Joseph John Gurney; from whom, as from Mr Samuel Hoare, he received unremitting assistance throughout the contest against slavery.

What chiefly led him to hesitate in adopting this question as his own, was the fear that the discussion of it in England might lead to a servile insurrection in the West Indies. He deeply felt the weight of this responsibility, and it was the subject of long and anxious thought. "If," said he, "a servile war should break out, and 50,000 perish, how should I like that?" But even this extreme supposition he met by the consideration, "If I had two sons, I would rather choose to have one free and one dead, than both living enslaved." In his first anti-slavery speech he enters at length into this difficulty, and mentions some of the considerations which had removed it from his mind; shewing how often insurrections had been foretold by the West Indians, and that their predictions had never been fulfilled; and further, that even were this fear well grounded, the English Government ought not to be terrified by it from examining into the evil in question.

He appears to have arrived at his final decision in the autumn of 1822; in the course of which Mr Wilberforce and Mr Macaulay visited Cromer Hall, for the purpose of discussing the question with him, and also with Dr Lushington and Lord Suffield. Then was drawn the first outline of those plans in which each, from this time, took his respective and important share.

Mr Wilberforce writes after leaving Cromer:—

"*October* 5, 1822.

"My Dear Buxton,—We brought much away from Cromer Hall, but we left there, as I have just discovered, O'Meara's 'Voice from St Helena.' My dear friend, never I believe, while I remember anything, shall I forget the truly friendly reception we experienced under your hospitable roof. I love to muse about you all, and form suitable wishes for the comfort and good of each member of your happy circle—for a happy circle it is—and surely there is nothing in the world half so delightful as mutual confidence, affection, and sympathy—to feel esteem as well as goodwill towards every human being around you, not only in your own house, but in the social

circle that surrounds your dwelling, and to be conscious that every other being is glowing with the same esteem and love towards you. I hope it is not profane to say, that when associated with heavenly aspirations and relations, such a state is a sort of little heaven upon earth. My dear friend, never shall I direct henceforth to Cromer Hall, without a number of delightful associations. God bless you all—and so I trust He will. It is quite refreshing in such a world as this, to think what a globule of friendship has been accumulated at Cromer from different little drops sprinkled over the sea-side. Give my kind remembrances to Mrs Buxton, Priscilla, the Hoares, Mrs Upcher, and indeed to all friends; to Mr and Mrs J. Gurney, and my old friend Mr Hoare; to the Lushingtons and Lord Suffield, whom I hope to know better. Meanwhile, I am ever affectionately yours, "W. WILBERFORCE."

A short time afterwards, Mr Wilberforce again wrote, to request that he would visit him at Marden Park, to arrange their plan of operations for the ensuing session.

Mr Macaulay and Mr Buxton arrived at Marden Park on the 8th of January; and (in the words of the biographers of Mr Wilberforce), "long and deep were their deliberations, how best to shape those measures which were to change the structure of society throughout the Western World."

Anti-slavery operations were now commenced with vigour, and for some time all went on well. Dr Lushington, Lord Suffield, and several others, who had taken a prominent part in the reformation of prison discipline, now threw all their energies into this new undertaking. Early in March, Mr Wilberforce published his well-known "Appeal on Behalf of the Slaves." At about the same time, the Anti-Slavery Society was formed, (Mr Buxton being appointed a vice-president,) and the committee engaged warmly in the task of collecting evidence and spreading information through the country. Public feeling was soon roused into activity, and petitions began to flow in; the lead was taken by the Society of Friends, and it was determined that the presentation of their appeal by the hands of Mr Wilberforce, should be the opening of the parliamentary campaign. He introduced it by saying that a similar petition which he had had the honour of presenting nearly thirty years before, had been the first effort against the kindred iniquity of the Slave Trade, and that, in presenting this one, "he considered that the first stone was laid of an edifice which would stand at some future period, an ornament to the land."

Mr Canning asked whether it was his intention to found any motion upon it? Mr Wilberforce said, "It was not, but that such was the intention of an esteemed friend of his."

Mr Buxton then gave notice that on the 15th of May "he would submit a motion, that the House should take into consideration the state of slavery in the British colonies."

On that day he wrote to Mrs Upcher:—

"In five minutes I start for the House. I hope to begin at five o'clock. I am in good health, in excellent spirits, with a noble cause, and without a fear. If I am only given a nimble tongue, we shall do."

This was the first debate on the subject of Negro Slavery. Mr Buxton began by moving a resolution, "That the state of slavery is repugnant to the principles of the British constitution and of the Christian religion; and that it ought to be gradually abolished throughout the British colonies, with as much expedition as may be found consistent with a due regard to the wellbeing of the parties concerned."

In his opening speech he plainly declared—"The object at which we aim is the *extinction of slavery*—nothing less than the extinction of slavery—in nothing less than the whole of the British dominions: not, however, the rapid termination of that state; not the sudden emancipation of the negro; but such preparatory steps, such measures of precaution, as, by slow degrees, and in a course of years—first fitting and qualifying the slaves for the enjoyment of freedom—shall gently conduct us to the annihilation of slavery."

When we observe these words, and the propositions embodied in Mr Buxton's letter to Earl Bathurst, we cannot help feeling astonished that the Abolitionists should have been so long and so severely blamed, for having rashly set the slaves free before they had fitted them for freedom; whereas, it was the Abolitionists who desired to approach emancipation by a long series of preparatory measures. It was the planters, as the sequel will prove, who rejected these preparatory measures, because they were meant to pave the way to ultimate emancipation.

The plan unfolded in Mr Buxton's speech exactly corresponded with that contained in his letter to Mr Wilmot Horton; but he especially urged the importance of emancipating all the children of the slaves; pointing out how surely, yet silently, the curse of slavery would thus die away. He proved that this had been done in other countries, without that noise and tumult with which his opponents predicted that it would be attended. This change was, in fact, at that very time, silently proceeding in Ceylon, Bencoolen, and St Helena.

"Now one word," he said, "as to the right of the master. There are persons whose notions of justice are so confused and confounded by slavery, as to suppose that the planter has something like an honest title to the person of the slave. We have been so long accustomed to talk of 'my slave,' and 'your slave,' and what he will fetch, if sold, that we are apt to imagine that he is really *yours or mine*, and that we have a substantial right to keep or sell him. Then let us just for a moment fathom this right. Here is a certain valuable commodity, and here are two claimants for it—a white man and a black man. Now, what is the commodity in dispute? The body of the black man. The white man says, 'it is mine,' and the black man, 'it is mine.' Now, the question is, if every man had his own, to whom would the black body belong? The claim of the black man is just this—Nature gave it him—he holds it by the grant of God. That compound of bone and muscles is his, by the most irreproachable of all titles—a title which admits not, what every other species of title admits, a suspicion of violence, or fraud, or irregularity. Will any man say he came by his body in an illegal manner. Does any man suspect he played the knave and purloined his limbs? I do not mean to say that the negro is not a thief—but he must be a very subtle thief indeed, if he stole even so much as his own little finger.

"At least you will admit this. The negro has a pretty good *prima facie* claim to his own person. If any man thinks he has a better—the *onus probandi* rests with him. Then we come to the claim of the white man. What is the foundation of your right? It shall be the best that can be possibly conceived. You received him from your father—very good. Your father bought him from a neighbouring planter—very good. That planter bought him of a trader in the Kingston Slave Market, and that trader bought him of a man-merchant in Africa. So far you are quite safe! How did the man-merchant acquire him? *He stole him*, he kidnapped him. The very root of your claim is robbery, violence, inconceivable wickedness. If anything on earth was ever produced by evidence, it was proved by the Slave-Trade Committee, that the method of obtaining slaves in Africa was robbery, man-stealing, and murder. Your pure title rests on these sacred foundations. If your slave came direct from Africa, your right to his person is absolutely nothing.

But your claim to the child born in Jamaica is (if I may use the expression) less still. The new-born infant has done, can have done, nothing to forfeit his right to freedom. And to talk about rights, justice, equity, and law as connected with slavery, is downright nonsense. If we had no interest in the case, and we were only speaking of the conduct of another nation, we should all use the same language; and we should speak of slavery as we now speak of slave-trading—that is, we should call it rank, naked, flagrant, undisguised injustice.

"Now, sir, observe the moderation with which we proceed. We say, 'Make no more slaves; desist from that iniquity; stop, abstain from an act, in itself as full of guilt, entailing in its consequences as much of misery as any felony you can mention.' We do not say, 'Retrace your steps,' but, 'stop.' We do not say, 'Make reparation for the wrong you have done;' but, 'do no more wrong; go no further; complete what you have commenced; screw from your slaves all that his bones and his muscles will yield you,—only stop there:' and when every slave now living shall have found repose in the grave, then let it be said that the country is satiated with slavery, and has done with it for ever."

An animated debate ensued, and Mr Canning moved and carried certain amendments to Mr Buxton's resolution; the most important of which was the insertion of the words, "with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property." Plausible as this addition seemed, the anti-slavery party feared, and, as we shall see, but too justly, that it would afford the West Indians a handle on future occasions; but the discussion grew warmest when Mr Canning brought forward his plan, that the proposed ameliorations should be suggested to the Colonial Legislatures, but should only be enforced in the island of Trinidad, which, being one of the crown colonies, had no legislature of its own; with the further condition, however, that any unexpected resistance to the suggestions should be met by authority.

The following were the resolutions carried by Mr Canning, to which we shall have frequent occasion to refer in detailing the proceedings during the subsequent ten years:—

1st, "That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for ameliorating the condition of the slave population in his Majesty's colonies.

2d, "That, through a determined and persevering, but at the same time judicious and temperate enforcement of such measures, this House looks forward to a progressive improvement in the character of the slave population, such as may prepare them for a par-

ticipation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of his Majesty's subjects.

3d, "That this House is anxious for the accomplishment of this purpose, at the earliest period that shall be compatible with the wellbeing of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property."

The debate concluded with a reply from Mr Buxton, which is mentioned by Mr Wilberforce as having been "short, and not sweet, indeed, but excellent." We will give one extract from it. It was in answer to the argument that the danger arose not from slavery itself, but from the discussion of slavery in the House:—

"What then?" he exclaimed, "Does the slave require any hint from us that he is a slave, and that slavery is of all conditions the most miserable? Why, sir, he hears this, he sees it, he feels it, too, in all around him. He sees his harsh, uncompensated labour; he hears the crack of the whip; he feels—he writhes under the lash. Does not this betray the secret?

'This is no flattery; these are counsellors
That feelingly persuade him what he is.'

He sees the mother of his children stripped naked before the gang of male negroes and flogged unmercifully; he sees his children sent to market, to be sold at the best price they will fetch; he sees in himself not a man, but a thing—by West Indian law a chattel, an implement of husbandry, a machine to produce sugar, a beast of burden! And will any man tell me that the negro, with all this staring him in the face, flashing in his eyes, when he rises in the morning and when he goes to bed at night, never dreams that there is injustice in such treatment till he sits himself down to the perusal of an English newspaper, and there to his astonishment discovers that there are enthusiasts in England who from the bottom of their hearts deplore and abhor all negro slavery? There are such enthusiasts; I am one of them; and while we breathe we will never abandon the cause till that thing—that chattel—is reinstated in all the privileges of man!"

Although the emancipation of children was lost, and even the alleviations of the slaves' condition were not to be compulsory, yet this debate was an important step gained; and Mr Buxton's emphatic words in his opening speech were verified:—"A few minutes ago was commenced that process which will conclude, though not speedily, in the extinction of slavery throughout the British dominions."

Mr Buxton had various communications with Mr Canning after the debate, and especially one long interview, in company with Mr Wilberforce and Mr William Smith. On

this important occasion, for which he had carefully prepared, he thoroughly ascertained Mr Canning's opinions on all points connected with the treatment, present and prospective, of colonial slaves. He then wrote down what had passed, and submitted the statement to Mr Canning. The document strikingly displays the laborious accuracy and the sturdy determination to verify every point of his case, which characterised his conduct throughout the entire contest. Mr Canning returned the paper with many autograph notes upon it, and Mr Buxton therefore exactly knew what were the ministers' intentions at this period. Neither party, however, were as yet aware of the difficulties of the case.

In accordance with the resolutions of the House, at the end of May, circular letters were addressed by the Government to the various colonial authorities, recommending them to adopt the following reforms :—

1. To provide the means of religious instruction and Christian education for the slave population.
2. To put an end to markets and to labour on the Sunday; and, instead of Sunday, to allow the negroes equivalent time on other days for the cultivation of their provision grounds.
3. To protect the slaves by law in the acquisition and possession of property, and in the transmission by bequest or otherwise.
4. To legalise the marriages of slaves, and to protect them in the enjoyment of their connubial rights.
5. To prevent the separation of families by sale or otherwise.
6. To restrain generally the power, and to prevent the abuse, of arbitrary punishment at the will of the master.
7. To abolish the degrading corporal punishment of females.
8. To admit the testimony of slaves in courts of justice.
9. To prevent the seizure of slaves detached from the estate or plantation to which they belonged.
10. To remove all the existing obstructions to manumission, and to grant to the slave the power of redeeming himself and his wife and children at a fair price.
11. To abolish the use of the driving-whip in the field, either as an emblem of authority, or as a stimulus to labour.
12. To establish savings' banks for the use of the slaves.

Surely there was good ground for anticipating that the Colonial Assemblies would gladly listen to these temperate and salutary suggestions.

Sir James Mackintosh had not hitherto taken any part in this question; and Mr Buxton, being extremely anxious to engage his brilliant abilities and benevolent heart in its favour, addressed the following letter to him :—

"CROMER HALL, *November* 30, 1823.

"MY DEAR SIR JAMES,—Your letter reached me just as I was leaving town. I much regret that I was thus prevented from talking with you on criminal law and colonial reform. The latter of these very much occupies my mind. I feel that a question of greater magnitude, affecting the happiness of a larger number of persons, has seldom been agitated; and I also feel that the crisis has arrived, in which we must either begin to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, and indeed to strike a blow at slavery, or in which slavery will be more firmly established than ever. I am, however, I must confess, alarmed, not at the reproach which is heaped on me, nor at the danger *said* to be produced in the West Indies by my motion. I disregard the former, and utterly disbelieve the latter; but I am alarmed at the prodigious strength of the West Indian party, and at the inability of the person to whom the cause of seven hundred thousand human beings is committed. How often have I wished, that that good cause were blessed with the *full, hearty,* unreserved, co-operation of yourself. . . . . If I have to fight the battle without such aid, the cause of justice and humanity will undoubtedly suffer from the feebleness of its advocate. With that aid, and with that of Brougham, of whom we are sure, I doubt not that the sons of the present slaves will be raised to a state of villanage, and their grandsons will be freemen. . . . . Now I have written this; I am ready to tear it to pieces, and to wonder at my own presumption in having written it. It shall, however, go. It is an entreaty for more than half a million of human beings, who cannot supplicate for themselves, and against whom there are many who can canvass and are canvassing stoutly."

CHAPTER IX.

SLAVERY. 1823–1826.

THE news of Mr Buxton's attack on what the planters considered to be their just rights, and of the acquiescence of the Government in his principles, were received in the West Indies with the most vehement indignation. For some weeks after the arrival of the despatches, not the slightest restraint seems to have been put on the violence of their rage, which drove them to the wildest designs. Thoughts were openly entertained of resisting the innovations of the Government by force of arms. It was even proposed to throw off the yoke of the mother country, and place themselves under the protection of America. They could find no language sufficiently bitter to express their rancour; and the Colonial Legislatures unanimously refused submission to the recommendations of the Government.

When the Order in Council reached Demerara, the authorities of the colony endeavoured to conceal the intelligence from the black population. Their precautions were worse than useless; exaggerated rumours soon spread abroad. The negroes fancied that "the great King of England" had set them free, and that the planters had suppressed his edict; and, under this impression, the slaves on several estates refused to work. Compulsion was resorted to—they resisted—and commenced outrages on the property and persons of the whites. Martial law was proclaimed, and the soldiers called out.

Destitute alike of organisation, of leaders, and of arms, the slaves were at once reduced to subjection. In performing this duty not one soldier was killed; but pressed down and running over was the measure of vengeance dealt to the unhappy negroes.

"It was deemed fitting," said Mr Brougham, "to make tremendous examples of them. Considerably above a hundred fell in the field, where *they* did not succeed in putting one soldier to death. A number of the prisoners also, it is said, were hastily drawn out at the close of the affray and shot. How many in the whole have since perished by sentences of the court does not appear, but by the end of September forty-seven had been executed. A more horrid tale of blood yet remains to be told. Within the short space of a week ten were torn in pieces by the lash; some of these had been condemned to six or seven hundred lashes; five to one thousand each; of which inhuman torture one had received the whole, and two almost the whole at once."

The Colonists were not satisfied by the severity with which the rebel negroes had been visited. For some time the attention of religious men in England had been drawn to the wretched ignorance and depravity of the lower orders in our colonial islands. Various denominations of Christians had sent out missionaries to instruct them; and the Independents and Wesleyans had distinguished themselves by their Christian zeal. It was no path of flowers which these missionaries had chosen. The Colonists were violently opposed to change; and with the usual feelings of despotic masters, they could not endure the idea of allowing their slaves to be educated; yet, in the face of danger and persecution, the missionaries persevered, and many of the negroes were brought to the knowledge of religion. The planters had tried every means to stop this "nuisance;" and when

the rebellion broke out, they resolved to fix it upon the Christian teachers of the negroes.

The particulars of "Smith's case," afterwards so ably treated by Mr Brougham, need not here be dwelt on. Suffice it to say, that he was an Independent missionary; was tried in a manner not only unjust, but absolutely illegal, before a court-martial of militia officers, and condemned to be hanged; but his treatment in prison destroyed his previously failing health, and he died in his dungeon.*

The news of the ferment among the Colonists, with the rapidly succeeding intelligence of the revolt of the negroes, of their overthrow, and of the severities inflicted upon them and upon their teachers, soon reached England. The disappointment and grief of the leading members of the anti-slavery party were great indeed; their lukewarm partisans left them at once, and joined in the loud outcry which arose against them. They were denounced as the causes of the disaffections of the Colonists and the disorders among the slaves. The people at large, in looking at the confusions of the Colonies, did not remember how gentle a remedy for the admitted evil of slavery was the one proposed by Mr Buxton; that all parties in England had agreed, with some modifications, as to its prudence; and that only to the wilfulness and prejudice of the Colonists were these unhappy results to be ascribed. But the angry reproaches which rang in Mr Buxton's ears were nothing compared with the mortification he experienced on discovering that the Government, appalled by the consequences of the steps which they had taken, and apparently as regardless of their own dignity as of the interests of their black subjects, were determined to forfeit the pledge which Mr Canning had given—that, if obedience were not voluntarily rendered by the Colonial Legislatures, it should be enforced. Rumours to this effect soon spread abroad; but they were of so in-

* While Smith was dying in his prison, (which is described as a place only suited to purposes of torture,) he was compelled by his persecutors to draw a bill upon the funds of the London Missionary Society, in order to defray the expenses of his so-called trial. Many years afterwards, the secretary of that society, in arranging some old papers, met with this bill. In looking at it, his attention was drawn to one corner of the sheet, and, on examining it more carefully, he found, written in a minute hand, the reference "2 Cor. iv. 8, 9;" on turning to which he found the text, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

definite a character, that the Abolitionists could not tell what steps the Government proposed to take, nor what preparations should be made against them. All the circumstances seemed to call on Mr Buxton to stop; but, far from staying his steps, he rather pushed forward. He was contemplating a new plan, namely, the emancipation of all children under seven years of age, ample compensation being granted to the masters: the children were to be educated and maintained by the British Government till they were seven years old, and then apprenticed to their former masters; after which they should be free.

The following letters will shew fully how the sense of the difficulty of his position, and of the necessity there was for firmly maintaining it, gradually increased in his mind.

On going to London in February, he writes:—

"*February* 9.

"As yet we have had no debate on slavery, but our foes are so very furious that I imagine we shall soon begin. I am intensely busy. On Saturday we had a meeting, to which I read my plan. The more I think of it, the more I like it. We meet again on Saturday: in the interim, an attack will probably be made on us, which I am to answer. I shall endeavour to do it with effect. We have a capital case as to the Demerara insurrection. Smith is innocent. They have offered him mercy if he will ask for it, and he has refused, standing on his innocence. I am in excellent spirits, and hold my head very high in the matter, and mean to be rather bold in my defence. I expect to see Canning to-morrow; he seems very cold to me, and the report is, he will join the West Indians. If he does, we shall go to war with him in earnest."

"*February* 10.

"My interview with Canning is for the purpose of ascertaining what Government means to do, and of seeing whether he is disposed to receive any plan from us."

"*February* 11.

"I am so languid with over-thought and over-work, that I hardly know how to write; but it is worth while to spend one's strength on that which, if it succeeds, will change the condition, almost the nature, of 700,000 human beings. On Saturday, we meet Canning at twelve o'clock, and Brougham, and all the leaders of our party, at the Duke of Gloucester's, at three o'clock. Then we shall decide on our course. I am not one bit discouraged, and heartily wish a discussion could be brought about, as I think it would change public opinion. How much, how very much happier I am in my Cromer retreat, than in the midst of all this bustle and turbulence. When you come I shall be quieter, I hope. I am obliged to attend constantly at the House."

"CANNING'S OFFICE, *Six o'clock, February* 14.

"We have had a very unsatisfactory interview with Canning. . . . . The Government mean *to forfeit their pledge*, and to do next to nothing. . . . . I have now seen Canning again. He promises to postpone any declaration to Parliament till he sees my plan."

"*February* 16.

"The degree of, opposition I will not call it, but virulence, against me is quite surprising. I much question whether there is a more unpopular individual than myself in the House just at this moment. For this I do not care.

"17*th*.—The slavery question looks wretchedly. I begin to think that, opposed as we are by the West Indians, deserted by Government, and deemed enthusiasts by the public, we shall be able to do little or nothing; however, I rejoice that we have tried."

It was indeed no light unpopularity which Mr Buxton had incurred. Both within and without the walls of the House, ridicule and abuse were heaped upon the Abolitionists during the first years of their attack on slavery. Their conduct was referred to the basest motives, and they were generally stigmatized as fools or knaves, sometimes as both. When the storm was at its highest, one of Mr Buxton's friends asked him, "What shall I say when I hear people abusing you?" "Say!" he replied, snapping his fingers, "say *that*. You good folk think too much of your good name. Do right, and *right will be done you*." Yet he was not indifferent to the odium which he incurred. Several years afterwards, when public opinion had changed, he expresses, in one of his papers, his gratitude to God, "that my privileges and enjoyments in life have not been destroyed; that my enemies (enemies of mine because I am the friend of the enslaved) have not triumphed over me; that I cannot now say, as David did, and as I was once prone to repeat, 'Reproach hath broken my heart.'"

"*February* 17.

"I see very clearly, that I shall not be able to go down to Cromer; my absence would further intimidate our few friends, who are sufficiently timid as it is. . . . . I keep up my spirits pretty well, but what with the mental fatigue I have undergone, and the disappointment we have experienced, I cannot feel very light-hearted."

"*February*, 1824.

"We had a very bustling day on Saturday; a meeting with Canning at twelve o'clock, in which he told us, that Government had determined to *yield to the West Indian clamour, and do nothing, except in Trinidad*, where there is no Colonial Assembly. There they will do everything they promised last year. This timidity is

very painful. It frustrates all our hopes, and it will enable the West Indians to say, that we are wild, enthusiastic people, and that the people of England ought to be guided by the sober discretion of Government—which sober discretion is downright timidity."

The ministers refused to adopt Mr Buxton's scheme, and as the 16th of March approached, (the day appointed by Mr Canning for the discussion of the question,) the Anti-slavery party, now reduced to a very small number, became much discouraged and depressed. The Government did not conceal that they meant to relinquish the policy of the preceding year; and it seemed probable that, having thus come to a breach with the Anti-slavery leaders, these latter would be treated as scapegoats, on whom public indignation might be poured. Under these circumstances, a difference of opinion arose in the Anti-slavery councils as to the course to be pursued.

Many advised that the anticipated attack from Mr Canning should be received in silence, and that the Anti-slavery party should not come forward to state their own case till some days afterwards, when the first impression made by his eloquence should have died away. On hearing that the venerable Mr Stephen concurred in this advice, Mr Buxton exclaimed—

"'Tis odds, indeed, when valiant Warwick flies."

To the course recommended he himself was altogether opposed: he wished to make a stand at once, and indeed to act on the offensive, by exposing the vacillation of the Government, if it should prove that they did not intend to fulfil the expectations held out in the preceding year. In these views he was supported by Dr Lushington, Mr William Smith, Mr W. Evans, and Mr S. Hoare.

Thus encouraged, Mr Buxton resolved to persevere: the other leaders gradually fell into his views, and the plan of operations was arranged. The previous division of opinion had, however, been a source of great anxiety to him; and he was almost worn out by his unremitting exertions, which had of late been chiefly directed to the procuring digested proofs of the cruelty with which the slaves were treated, and of the rapid decrease of the black population. He writes on the 12th February 1824:—"The weight of business, and worse still, of thought, which overhangs me

at this time, is greater than I ever experienced before;" and on another occasion,—"I am fatigued, I am distressed with fatigue." The prospect before him was full of difficulties. The small Anti-slavery party were attacked on all sides with fury. In the House there were hardly more than half-a-dozen stanch friends to the cause, while two hundred members were considered to be more or less directly inimical to it; and now, if the Government were to be swayed by the tide of public opinion, and abandon its schemes of the previous year, how could the small, unaided band of Abolitionists indulge the hope of even ultimate success in their undertaking?

Their fears were but too well founded. Mr Canning carefully withdrew from his connexion with those whose principles and measures he had the year before, in a great degree, adopted as his own, but whom he now discovered to be acting "under the impulses of enthusiasm;" and he informed the House, "that the Government was determined to compel the ameliorations in Trinidad, but to apply for the present no measure more stringent than 'admonition' to the contumacious Colonies."

Mr Buxton replied, and fearlessly attacked the Government for its vacillating conduct. He read over the resolutions of the year before; which he justly denominated "a distinct pledge given by Government that the condition of the slave population should be ameliorated." Quoting also Mr Canning's words, that "if the Colonial Legislatures would not consent to these ameliorations,—if any resistance should be manifested to the expressed and declared wish of Parliament, any resistance which should partake, not of reason, but of contumacy,—it would create a case, upon which his Majesty's Government would not hesitate to come down to Parliament for counsel."

"Now," said Mr Buxton, "if this full and comprehensive pledge, this engagement given as to *all* the Colonies, is to be frittered down, at present at least, to a single island; if the advantages promised are to be granted indeed, to the 30,000 slaves in Trinidad, but withheld from the 350,000 in Jamaica, and the 70,000 in Barbadoes; if the '*earliest period*' is to be construed to mean some time, so undefined and distant, that no man can say in what century it will take place; if our pledge to do this is now to mean no more than that we will suffer it to be done by the slow and gradual course of admonition and example—then, I see no reason why ten centuries may

not elapse, before the negroes are freed from their present state of melancholy and deplorable thraldom. We who have engaged in the cause, we, at least, will be no parties to such a desertion of duty, to such a breach of faith.

"I well know," he added, "the difficult situation in which I stand. No man is more aware than I am of my inability to follow the brilliant and able speech which has just been delivered. But I have a duty to perform, and I will perform it. I know well what I incur by this. I know how I call down upon myself the violent animosity of an exasperated and most powerful party. I know how reproaches have rung in my ears since that pledge was given, and how they will ring with tenfold fury now that I call for its fulfilment. Let them ring! I will not purchase for myself a base indemnity with such a sting as this on my conscience: 'You ventured to agitate the question; a pledge was obtained; you were, therefore, to be considered the holder of that pledge, to which the hopes of half a million of people were linked. And then, fearful of a little unpopularity, and confounded by the dazzling eloquence of the right hon. gentleman, you sat still, you held your peace, and were satisfied to see his pledge, in favour of a whole archipelago, reduced to a single island.'"

He concluded his speech, in which he laid bare a series of acts of atrocious cruelty in the treatment of the negroes, by stating distinctly, "What I have now said, I have said from a sense of public duty. I have no hostility to the planters. Compensation to the planter, emancipation to the children of the negro—these are my desires, this is the consummation, the just and glorious consummation, on which my hopes are planted, and to which, as long as I live, my most strenuous efforts shall be directed!" He was well supported by Dr Lushington, Mr Evans, and Mr Wilberforce. The latter, who, as usual, was hopeful amidst discouragements, thus addresses him on the day after the debate:—

"BROMPTON GROVE, *March* 17, 1824.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—It was quite a disappointment to me not to see you at the House to-day. There are points on which I shall be glad to confer with you. Meanwhile I am strongly urged by my feelings to express to you the solid satisfaction with which I take a *sober estimate* of the progress which, through the goodness of Providence, we have already made, and the good hopes which we may justly indulge as to the future. To find the two Houses of Parliament, each full of members to the brim, consulting about the interests and comforts of those who, not long ago, were scarcely rated above the level of orang-outangs, is almost as sure an indication of our complete success ere long, as the streaks of morning light are of the fulness of meridian day. I hope I may live to congratulate you, even in this world, on the complete success of your gene-

rous labours; at all events, I trust humbly, that we may rejoice and triumph together in a better world, for we, my dear friend, may, more truly than the great artist, affirm, that we are working for eternity. And our κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ will be enjoyed, I trust, in common with many, many of our poor black brethren, when all bondage and injustice, all sorrow and pain having ceased, love and truth, and mercy and peace and joy, shall be our everlasting portion. Oh, my friend, let us strive more and more earnestly for all that is right here, looking forward to these glorious prospects!"

On the 1st of June a motion respecting the missionary Smith was brought forward by Mr Brougham, in a brilliant speech of four hours' length, which produced a strong effect upon public feeling.

One remarkable circumstance by which the Demerara insurrection was distinguished, namely, the extraordinary forbearance of the rebel negroes, is thus mentioned by him:—

"The slaves," he said, "inflamed by false hopes of freedom, agitated by rumours, and irritated by the suspense and ignorance in which they were kept; exasperated by ancient as well as more recent wrongs, (for a sale of fifty or sixty of them had just been announced, and they were about to be violently separated and dispersed,) were satisfied with combining not to work, and thus making their managers repair to the town and ascertain the precise nature of the boon reported to have arrived from England. The calumniated minister had so far humanised his poor flock, his dangerous preaching had so enlightened them, the lessons of himself and his hated brethren had sunk so deep in their minds, that by the testimony of the clergymen, and even of the overseers, the maxims of the gospel of peace were upon their lips in the midst of rebellion, and restrained their hands when no other force was present to resist them. 'We will take no life,' said they, 'for our pastors have taught us not to take that which we cannot give,' a memorable peculiarity which drew from the truly pious minister* of the Established Church there, the exclamation, 'that he shuddered to write that the planters were seeking the life of the man whose teaching had saved theirs.'"†

Sir James Mackintosh followed, and was succeeded by Dr Lushington, Mr Wilberforce, Mr Williams, and Mr Denman. The debate was closed by a powerful reply from Lord Brougham. This discussion, as had been predicted, changed the current of public opinion. The nation, which before had partaken of the consternation of the Government, began to awaken to the truth, and from

* The clergyman here referred to was the Rev. Mr Austin, whose conduct in this transaction caused his exile from Demerara.

† Hansard's Debates. New Series, vol. xi. p. 994.

henceforth the religious public in England was strongly enlisted on behalf of the oppressed missionaries and their persecuted followers; and this feeling soon increased into a detestation of that system, of which such intolerance was the natural fruit. On the 15th of June, the subject was renewed in the House by Mr Wilberforce, and a promise was wrested from the Government of extending the Order in Council to St Lucia and Demerara, as well as Trinidad.

Mr Buxton passed the autumn at Cromer Hall, recruiting his health, and at the same time strenuously exerting himself in procuring information which might assist the future conduct of the cause.

In June 1825, he brought before the House the case of Mr Shrewsbury. This gentleman was a Wesleyan missionary in Barbadoes, "in whose conduct," as Mr Canning expressly stated in the House, "there did not appear the slightest ground of blame or suspicion." But the planters were exasperated against him for his exertions in the instruction of the negroes and free people of colour; and it was also charged against him, that he had actually corresponded with Mr Buxton! "Though," said the latter in the House, "I never received from or wrote to him a single letter; *nor did I know that such a man existed,* till I happened to take up a newspaper, and there read, with some astonishment, that he was going to be hanged for corresponding with me!"

On two successive Sundays in October 1823, the doors of Mr Shrewsbury's chapel were stormed during the hours of divine worship by a furious mob, who did not, however, at that time proceed to actual outrage; but a day or two afterwards a "proclamation" was published, calling on all the "true lovers of religion" to assemble in arms on the following Sunday, and pull down the chapel and mission-house. This they accordingly did; but Mr Shrewsbury had concealed himself in the house of a clergyman, "whose kindness," said Mr Buxton, "then displayed to a poor, friendless missionary, hunted for his life by an infuriated mob, I will now return, by concealing his name; knowing, that if I were to mention it with approbation, the fate of Mr Austin of Demerara would await him."

"There is," he continued, "in this transaction at Barbadoes, as

there was also in that at Demerara, that which of all things I hate the most, a rank, fierce, furious spirit of religious bigotry dominant throughout the island, and pursuing its victims, the one to death, and the other to exile. But there is that, also, which does honour to human nature, and casts a glory round the Church to which I belong, and which I prefer to all others, namely, that these poor victims, Dissenters, missionaries, Methodists, though they were, found their best friends, and their most faithful advisers, in the ranks of our clergy. Mr Austin, for one of the most noble acts which have been done in our days, is a ruined and banished man; and I conceal the name of the other, in order to spare him—the honours, indeed, but—the sufferings of martyrdom."*

He concluded, not by demanding any punishment on the guilty parties, but simply by moving that they should be compelled to rebuild the chapel. The House, however, would only join him in a vote of censure upon those concerned in the crime.

In his reply at the end of the debate, he said,—

"I wish it to be distinctly understood that it is my firm and unalterable resolution to devote all my life and my efforts to advocating the cause of the slaves; and that I will persist in that course, in spite of opposition, unpopularity, obloquy, or falsehood."

In the beginning of the session of 1826, Mr Buxton mentions that two meetings about slavery had been already held; and he adds,—

"I saw Canning yesterday: he was very friendly; intimated that the Government meant to do something; but as he had refused to tell the West Indians what that something was, he also refused to tell us. On Tuesday next I bring forward the London Petition, and we shall have a warm discussion. On Thursday we have Denman's motion on the Jamaica trials—another fierce discussion; and these will probably be followed by a host of other questions."

Mr Buxton presented the London petition against slavery on the 1st of March: it was signed by 72,000 persons. In his speech he praised the Order in Council enforced in Trinidad, and again pointed out how ineffectual had been the recommendations of the Government to the legislatures of the other islands. "I am anxious," he declared, "to say nothing that can give offence to any party; but it is my duty broadly to declare my confirmed and deliberate conviction, that this House must do the work themselves, or suffer it to be altogether abandoned."

After the close of this session, there was a pause in the operations of the Abolitionists. As Mr Canning had posi-

* Hansard. New Series, vol. xiii. p. 1285.

tively declared that the Government would give the Colonial Legislature another year's trial, before it would take the task of amelioration into its own hands, nothing remained for the Anti-slavery party but to await the expiration of that period.

CHAPTER X.

1822–1826.

FOR the last few years Mr Buxton had generally resided with his family in the spring and summer, near the House of Commons, spending, however, much of his time at Ham House, Mr S. Gurney's seat in Essex, and with Mr S. Hoare, at Hampstead. Amid the turmoil of his parliamentary life, these country visits were of great advantage to him, as affording him quiet hours for study, and the opportunity of taking those solitary rambles which were the times with him of deepest reflection.

In 1825, he took a house in Devonshire Street, Portland Place; but as long as he remained in Parliament, a day of leisure generally found him and Mrs Buxton either at Hampstead or at Ham House. Mr and Mrs S. Hoare, also, regularly passed the months of September and October at Cromer, and for the first year or two Cromer Hall was held in common by the two families.

After the busy summer in London, Mr Buxton highly relished the retirement and recreation which this place afforded. He never lost his taste for shooting, and had the reputation of being a first-rate shot. Great pains were taken by him in the management of his game, especially in rearing his pheasants, which used to feed in very large numbers on the lawn, immediately under the drawing-room windows; yet he was scarcely ever annoyed by poachers. On one occasion, however, while riding along the road, he saw a young man, in an adjoining field, fire at a partridge and kill it. He opened the gate, and riding up to the youth, who seemed not a little startled at the apparition, said to him, in a somewhat abrupt tone, "Now, sir, allow me to ask you three questions: First, what is your name and residence; secondly, where is your licence; and, thirdly, who gave you leave to shoot over my ground?" The young

man made a low bow, and answered in the blandest manner: "My name, sir, is ——. As to your two other questions, with your leave, I'll waive them. Sir, I wish you a very good morning;" and so saying, to Mr Buxton's no small amusement, he slipped out of the field.

Once, when he was staying with Mr Coke at Holkham, a well-known professor was also one of the visitors. The venerable historian had never had a gun in his hand, but on this occasion Mr Coke persuaded him to accompany the shooting-party; care, however, was taken to place him at a corner of the covert, where it was thought the other sportsmen would be out of his reach. When the rest of the party came up to the spot where he was standing, Mr Coke said to him, "Well, what sport? You have been firing pretty often!" "Hush!" said the professor, "there it goes again;" and he was just raising his gun to his shoulder, when a man walked very quietly from the bushes about seventy yards in front of him. It was one of the beaters who had been set to stop the pheasants, and his leather gaiters, dimly seen through the bushes, had been mistaken for a hare by the professor, who, much surprised by its tenacity of life, had been firing at it whenever he saw it move. "But," said Mr Buxton, "the man had never discovered that the professor was shooting at him!"

No Arab ever took a greater delight in horses; and several of his favourites, especially John Bull, Abraham, and Jeremie, were renowned for their strength and beauty. He was considered a very good judge, and never hesitated to give any price, in order to render his stud more complete. Of dogs, too, he was very fond; one of his pets came into his possession in a singular manner. He was standing at the door of the House of Commons talking to a friend, when a beautiful black and tan terrier rushed between them, and immediately began barking furiously at Mr Joseph Pease, who was speaking. All the members jumped up, laughing, and some calling out, "Hear the member for Berkshire;" while officers of the House chased the dog round and round, till at last he took refuge with Mr Buxton; who, as he could find no traces of an owner, carried him home. He proved to be quite an original. One of his whims was to visit, by himself, at the country houses

in the neighbourhood of Cromer, and his refined manners and intelligence made "Speaker" a welcome guest, wherever he pleased to go.

Once at rest in the retirement of Cromer Hall, Mr Buxton began to lose the grave and care-worn expression which usually marked his countenance while under the heavy pressure of business in town; not that the autumn was wholly spent in recreation; on the contrary, his studies, chiefly bearing on public objects, were steadily pursued. He generally passed the latter part of his evenings alone in his study, frequently remaining there to a very late hour.

Cromer Hall was often filled with an easy social party, but he had no wish to extend his circle much beyond his own relatives, a select few of his parliamentary friends, and the families in the immediate neigbourhood. He had no taste for society of a more formal, and, as he thought, insipid character, nor did he much care for conversation, though at table he would usually enliven the party by his playfulness of manner, and by his store of anecdotes, which he could tell with much force and spirit. He took great pains in providing amusements for the younger members of the circle. There is much picturesque scenery around Cromer, and large parties were often collected for excursions to Sheringham, one of the most beautiful spots in all the eastern counties, to the wooded dells of Felbrigg and Runton, or to the rough heath ground by the Black Beacon. At home, also, he was energetic in setting on foot amusements for his young friends, such as acting charades, dancing, Christmas games, or amusing reading. At one time a family newspaper was started, which appeared once a-week; and great was the interest excited in reading the various contributions, grave and gay, which every one sent in. Sometimes he would give a list of poets, from whose works the juvenile part of the circle were invited to learn by heart; and examinations were held, with valuable books as prizes. Other schemes of the same kind were frequently set on foot, all intended to draw out the mind, and spur it to exertion. His thoughtfulness for others, combined with an unswerving strictness, gave him a remarkable influence over those around him; it has been thus referred to by one who was a frequent guest at Cromer Hall:—

"I wish I could describe the impression made upon me by the extraordinary power of interesting and stimulating others which was possessed by Sir Fowell Buxton some thirty years ago. In my own case it was like having powers of thinking, powers of feeling, and, above all, the love of true poetry, suddenly aroused within me, which, though I may have possessed them before, had been till then unused. From Locke on the Human Understanding to 'William of Deloraine good at need,' *he* woke up in me the sleeping principle of taste; and in giving me such objects of pursuit, has added immeasurably to the happiness of my life."

He more than once recommended Locke on the Understanding to the perusal of young people, as a useful work in establishing the habit of receiving truth with impartiality. "That," he said, "is one of the most important things to impress on the minds of children, habitually to seek for *the truth*, whether for or against our previous opinions and interests." He certainly illustrated his own maxim, for he was from his youth up remarkably free from prejudices, and ready to give ear to whatever could be adduced against his own views.

He seems to have had some idea of publishing a little work, to be called "Maxims for the Young." The following extracts from the rough memoranda for this work throw light, not only upon his views as to education, but also on his own character :—

HINTS FOR MAXIMS FOR THE YOUNG.

"Mankind in general mistake difficulties for impossibilities. That is the difference between those who effect, and those who do not.

"People of weak judgment are the most timid, as horses half blind are most apt to start.

"Burke in a letter to Miss Shackleton says :—

"'Thus much in favour of activity and occupation, that the more one has to do, the more one is capable of doing, even beyond our direct task.'

"Plato, 'better to err in acts, than principles.'

"Idleness the greatest prodigality.

"Two kinds of idleness,—a listless, and an active.

"If industrious, we should direct our efforts to right ends.

"Possibly it may require as much (industry) to be best billiard-player as to be senior wrangler.

"The endowments of nature we cannot command, but we can cultivate those given.

"My experience, that men of great talents are apt to do nothing for want of vigour.

"Vigour,—energy,—resolution,—firmness of purpose,—these carry the day.

"Is there one whom difficulties dishearten,—who bends to the storm?—He will do little. Is there one who *will* conquer?—That kind of man never fails.

"Let it be your first study to teach the world that you are not wood and straw—*some iron in you.*

"Let men know that what you say you will do; that your decision made is final,—no wavering; that, once resolved, you are not to be allured or intimidated.

"Acquire and maintain that character."

. . . . . .

"*Eloquence*—the most useful talent; one to be acquired, or improved; all the great speakers bad at first.—Huskisson.—How to be acquired.

"Write your speeches,—no inspiration.

"Labour to put your thoughts in the clearest view.

"A bold, decided, outline.

"Read 'multum, non multa,—homo unius libri.'

"Learn by heart everything that strikes you.—Fox.

"Thus ends my lecture; nineteen out of twenty become good or bad as they choose to make themselves.

"The most important part of your education is that which you now give yourselves."

He writes to his nephew, Mr Hoare's eldest son, who had been disappointed in the scholarship examination at Trinity:—

"Hampstead, *April* 27, 1827.

"I need not, I suppose, say that I have my full share of this disappointment; but that is not the subject on which I am going to write. All my advice is crowded into this single sentence, 'Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito.'

"This mortification is a test which will try your character. If that character be feeble, the disappointment will weigh upon your spirits; you will relax your exertions, and begin to despond, and to be idle. That is the general character of men: they can do very well when the breeze is in their favour, but they are cowed by the storm. If your character is vigorous and masculine, you will gather strength from this defeat, and encouragement from this disappointment. If fortune will not give you her favours, you will tear them from her by force; and if you were my own son, as you very nearly are, I would rather you should have failed, and then exhibited this determination, than that everything should have gone smoothly. I like your letter much; it breathes a portion of this unconquerable spirit, which is worth all the Latin, Greek, and Logarithms in the world, and all the prizes which ever were given. Now, then, is the time; be a man and avenge yourself at the next examination. If you are sick at heart, and can't sleep, and laugh, and defy malicious

fortune, then you may make a very decent banker, but there is an end of you. If you can summon up courage for the occasion, and pluck from this failure the materials for future success, then the loss of the scholarship may be a gain for life."

He could not bear the stream of life to run shallow: he liked its tide to be full and strong, longing to make others share in his own impetus and force of character. This delight in manliness of mind led him to set his face firmly against all listlessness in amusement as well as in study. He was much averse to confining boys too closely to the schoolroom, and was always ready to propose holidays; but then he took care to provide shooting, cricketing, or some other active diversion for them. At the same time he was very strict in enforcing his orders. The tendency of his mind was to assume command in a decisive and even somewhat stern manner; but this was corrected by the extreme tenderness of his heart, which led him in all things to weigh carefully the feelings and pleasures of those under his authority. "I know," he says in a letter from Cromer Hall, "that I am often harsh, and violent, and very disagreeable, but I sincerely think that I do not know a person less inclined than I am to *curb the deep desires* of others, or to force my views down their throats. I believe I am a true friend to liberty of feeling, and I think it high arrogance in one human being to pretend to dictate to another what is for that other's happiness." His forbearance was continually shewn in the turmoil of public life. In transacting business, on committees, and in the conduct of difficult affairs with those of widely diverging opinions, his subjugation of temper, and his gentle, persuasive manner were remarkable. One of his most faithful supporters at Weymouth thus writes of him:—

"It must be well known to every one conversant with contested elections, that nothing can try the temper more, from the unwarrantable liberty of the press and the unfair means, both in word and deed, used on such occasions; yet though I have followed the late Sir Fowell through all his hard, long, and severe contests in this borough, I never knew him *once* lose his temper, *once* give a harsh reply, or use an unkind word to any one; nothing ever disturbed the 'even tenor of his way.'"

Before the establishment of the floating light off Happisburgh, wrecks were very frequent on the Cromer coast. On any rumour of a vessel in danger, Mr Buxton and Mr

Hoare used to be among the first on the shore, not merely to urge and direct the efforts of others, but to give their personal aid. On one of these occasions Mr Buxton himself ran considerable risk in the terrible storm of the 31st of October, 1823, which was long remembered on the Norfolk coast. About twelve o'clock a collier brig, "The Duchess of Cumberland," ran upon the rocks off the Cromer lighthouse. The lifeboat was immediately brought out, but so tremendous was the sea that no persuasion could induce the fishermen to put off. Once when a wave ran up the beach and floated her, Mr Buxton hoping to spur them on by his example, sprang in, shouting to them to follow him, but without effect. Captain Manby's gun was repeatedly fired, but the line fell short of the vessel, in which nine sailors were seen lashed to the shrouds. At length a huge sea burst over her, and she went to pieces, blackening the waters with her cargo of coal. For an instant the spectators looked on in silent awe. "Poor dear hearts, they're all gone now!" exclaimed an old fisherman; but at that moment Mr Buxton thought he saw one of them borne upon the top of a wave. Without waiting for a rope, he at once dashed into the surf—caught the man—flung himself upon him, and struggled against the strong drawback of the retiring billow, until others could reach him, and he was dragged to land with his rescued mariner, both of them in a state of utter exhaustion. The deed was considered by those on shore to have been one of extreme peril and daring. He said himself that he felt the waves play with him as he could play with an orange.

A prominent feature of his character was the careful employment of his influence in promoting the spread of religion around him. On the Sunday evenings his large dining-room was usually filled with a miscellaneous audience, many of the fishermen and other neighbours collecting round him as well as his own household; and very impressive were his brief but well-digested comments on the passage of Scripture he had read. His rule was to say nothing unless he had something really weighty to say. His manner of speaking shewed that he was not only a teacher but a learner; he appeared to drink in the truth, and to appropriate it with an earnestness which could not

but excite a corresponding feeling in those who heard him. His sentiments with regard to the study of the Scriptures are thus expressed :—

"Undoubtedly it is good to read the Bible; it is well to read it occasionally; and if we do no more than take a superficial view of it, and just snatch a few fragments of truth from it, even this is better than its utter neglect.

"But this is not the way to gather from the Sacred Word those treasures of knowledge which it will yield. We must not read it but study it; we must not cast a hasty glance upon it, but meditate upon it deeply with fixed attention, with full purpose of heart, with all the energy of our minds, if we desire to become masters of the treasures of revelation; and I am sure that Scripture thus diligently studied, read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested; and read too with prayer for the influence of the Holy Spirit, will furnish us with new light, open to us new views, and will appear to us in itself of a new character, adorned with a variety of beauties, with an emphasis of expression, with a power and a vigour and an appropriateness to our own needs, with a harvest of divine instruction and cogent truth, never yielded to its careless cultivation. I have known men, and men of good understanding, who have been induced to read the Bible, and who have protested that they could make nothing of it, that they could not comprehend it;—no wonder; it is a sealed book to those who neither ask nor receive the Holy Spirit.

"An astronomer looks at the face of the heavens through a telescope, spangled with stars and planets, and sees a harmony, an order, a profuse display of power and wisdom. An ordinary man surveys the same sky with the naked eye, and observes nothing of all this: he has not the instrument; he wants the telescope which would reveal the wonders of the heavens to him. And so it is in reading the Bible; if a man looks at it with naked unassisted reason, he sees little, and learns nothing; he wants the instrument, the Holy Spirit, to guide his inquiries, to enlighten his understanding, to touch his heart.

"But if some read it and learn nothing, others read it and learn but little. They begin without prayer, and they end without meditation. They read, but they do not inwardly digest; while others embrace its truths, seize and secure its treasures, and, to use the figure of Scripture, receive the engrafted word which is able to save their souls."

Mr Buxton and Mr Hoare had taken much pains in establishing branches of the Bible and missionary societies at Cromer, and from that time they made a point of attending and taking a part in the annual meetings. Only on one occasion was Mr Hoare absent from them, up to the time of his death—a period of twenty-five years; and Mr Buxton was scarcely less regular. In every way he strove

to promote the wellbeing of his poorer neighbours: their sufferings touched him to the quick, and great was his anxiety to relieve them. Proofs that he was popular among them were often given. Having gone one day to speak to one of the magistrates, in coming out he was surrounded by a crowd of people, one of whom said to him, "I hope, sir, you will attend the meeting to-day." "No, I do not understand magistrates' business." "Yes, sir," answered a man, "*you* are the poor man's magistrate."

TO A FRIEND.

"LONDON, *April* 16, 1823.

"I will take an early opportunity of moving for the account of the stations, and for the number of lives saved by the use of Captain Manby's apparatus; but the purpose of my writing at present is of a different nature. You say 'Pathos is not, in any sense, in my composition,' and you intimated in our conversation last Sunday, that you felt fit for the drudgery of stating facts, but not possessed of the art of giving to your statements entertainment and interest. Now, this is utterly and without reserve untrue. The fact is that all persons, if they set about it aright, have the capacity of conveying their feelings to others. . . . . Honestly speaking, however, I do think there is a certain degree of languor and want of vivacity in your studied productions; and I am sure I know the cause. You imagine, when you appear before the public, that you must appear in full dress, correct to a nicety—precise to a hair; and that artless, native naïveté, and undressed good-humour, are unbefitting so solemn an occasion as an address to the public: in all which you are eminently deceived. You are of opinion that the public is so sagacious a creature as to require only bare facts; that he wants no more ornament or entertainment than a mathematician. Now, believe me, the public neither can nor will receive into his obtuse understanding anything which is not conveyed through the medium of his imagination or his feelings; and if you want to move him, you must address yourself to those only openings through which he is assailable. All the observations I have made in life,—all the persons who have succeeded, and all those who have failed, furnish proofs of this. I will, however, only give you one. Dr Lawrence, a man of great learning and talents, used to make speeches in the House, admirable for their facts, but to which no man ever attended, except Fox: he was always seen sitting in the attitude of deep attention; and when asked the reason, he said, 'Because I mean to speak this speech over again.' He actually did so; and those facts which, from Dr Lawrence, were unbearably heavy, moved and delighted the House from Fox, and insured certain and silent attention from all. Why? Because Dr L. thought with you,—and Fox had the good fortune to agree with me!

"Now, then, the application of all this. You ought to study the art of composition—the means of conveying to the world your own

views and feelings. I am sure, from your habits of research, and your literary powers and opportunities, *you may do a great deal of good;* but you are bound to do your best to effect that object, in the way by which alone it can be accomplished—by *tickling the fancy* of the public.

. . . . . .

"First, I should advise you, in writing, to put down the native, gay effusions of your own mind; and to avoid destroying their effect by a cold, correct emendation.

"Secondly, I would advise you to study composition;—'but where?' In 'Cicero,' in 'Quinctilian,' in 'Chesterfield's Letters,' (you will smile at the assembly,) in the three papers on the speech of Demosthenes in the *Edinburgh Review*, in 'South's Sermons,' 'Junius's Letters,' and the 'Spectator.' Imbibe the spirit of these, and I will venture to assert that the public will feel as you feel, and respond to any appeal you make to them."

To a friend who had remonstrated with him on speaking too strongly to a person in power on the subject of slavery:—

"1826.

"I cannot leave London without acknowledging the receipt of your letter, though I am not very well.

"Our conversation has left a kind of double impression on my mind. I am glad I spoke out. I have made it a sacred rule to myself never to change my opinion of a man for whom I felt a friendship, without telling him, to his face, what I had to object against him. I have sometimes found myself altogether mistaken; and often, if not always, there has been something to be said on the other side which I had not anticipated. I am not aware that I ever had a quarrel with any one who had been my friend, and to this good rule I owe my preservation. I am glad, therefore, that I did not disguise what had been long and much on my mind. It is to me matter of amazement that any man of principle can materially differ with me on the subject of slavery. I wonder when I see an honest man who does not hate it as I do, who does not long for the opportunity of giving it a death-blow; and as I cannot believe that any change of circumstances could make me anything but a favourer, and well-wisher, and encourager to those who were devoted to that duty, I am quite perplexed by finding that there are persons who look upon me, because thus engaged, with an unfriendly eye. —— is a man for whom I have ever entertained both respect and liking; I am therefore glad I hazarded the truth; but I am not glad that I did it in so strong a manner. I did not tell my whole mind. I wished to have said that I was very sorry I could not acknowledge many services he had rendered to our cause; but I wished to have said this in sorrow, not in anger: and if I left the impression that I had any feeling of enmity towards him I did myself great injustice."

TO A CLERGYMAN.

"CROMER HALL, *August* 22, 1826.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I very much wish you would come into

Norfolk, for I really want to have a conversation with you; and, it is odd enough, that it is upon a business entirely yours, with which I have no kind of concern. I remember two observations of yours which, little as I might appear to heed them at the time, made a deep impression on me. The one was, 'I should very much like to be a country gentleman. I would not have the best horses, or dogs, or farms, in the county; but I would exert myself to improve the people who were under my influence. A country gentleman, thus employed, *totis viribus*, might accomplish a vast range of good.' The other was, when you said to one of your parishioners who was fond of music, 'I, too, love music; I hope to enjoy a great deal of it, but I will wait till I get to heaven.' Now, having had the use of these observations for some years, I feel bound to return them to you for your use and benefit, for it strikes me you want them just at this time. I hear you are going to build a house; no doubt you will do it with excellent taste; then it will require to be suitably furnished; then the grounds must be improved about it, and, by that time, your heart will be in it. I am sure that house will lead to your secularisation. It will melt you down towards an ordinary country parson; not the parson who loves his dinner and his claret, but rather towards that refined class of triflers who exquisitely embellish houses and gardens, and who leave the minds and souls of their flocks to take care of themselves. You see I have scratched out 'into' and inserted 'towards,' because I am bound in truth to confess, that I am sure you will, under any circumstances, and in spite of all seductions be an exemplary clergyman. You will have your schools, and your week-day services, and your sound, lively, evangelical doctrine in the pulpit; but what I mean to say is, that just so much of your affections as you give to your house, exactly so much will you withdraw from your parish.

"After all, the discharge of a man's duty, and, *à fortiori*, of a clergyman's duty, requires all the strength we can give it. The world, and the spirit of the world, are very insidious, and the older we grow the more inclined we are to think as others think, and act as others act; and more than once I have seen a person, who, as a youth, was single-eyed and single-hearted, and who, to any one who supposed he might glide into laxity of zeal, would have said, 'Am I a dog?' in maturer age become, if not a lover of the vices of the world, at least a tolerator of its vanities. I speak here feelingly, for the world has worn away much of the little zeal I ever had. 'What is the harm,' you will say, 'of a convenient house; what is the harm of a convenient house being elegant; of an elegant house being suitably furnished?' The same personage who insinuates this to you, said to me, 'Where is the harm of having a few dogs—those few very good; you preserve game—do it well—do it better than other people:' and so he stole away my heart from better things. I have more game, and better horses and dogs than other people, but the same energy, disposed of in a different way, might have spread Bible and missionary societies over the hundred of North Erpingham.

"All this applies to you, more than to any person I know. You

have, by a singular dispensation of Providence, obtained a station of influence; you have a vigour and alacrity of mind with which few are gifted; upon no man's heart is 'the vanity of this life' more strongly stamped. You have a great, as far as my experience goes, an unequalled influence over those around you. These together constitute great power of doing good. The question is, shall you give it wholly to God, walking through life as one who really despises the indulgences on which others set their hearts; acting fully up to your own creed, and the convictions of your better moments, or will you give two-thirds of that power to God, and one-third of it to the world? Will you have your music here, or will you wait a few years for it? Old Wesley said, when called upon, according to the act of Parliament, to give an account of his service of plate, in order to be taxed, 'I have five silver spoons; these are all I have, and all I mean to have, while my poor neighbours want bread.' That is the spirit which becomes a minister. Will you say, twenty years hence, to Death, when he pays you a visit, 'I built this house—by the confession of all men, a parsonage in the purest taste; I selected these pictures: observe the luxuriance of the trees I planted; just do me the favour to notice the convenience of this library, and the beauty of the prospect from that window?' or will you say, 'I have spent my days in this homely habitation, where there is nothing for luxury to enjoy or taste to admire; but there is my parish, not a child there but can read the Bible, and loves it too: in every house there is prayer, in every heart there is an acknowledgment of Christ, and that He came into the world to save sinners?' I do not mean to say, even if you build your house, that when that epoch arrives you will not be able to shew a very good parish, as well as a very good parsonage; I only mean to say, that the house and the parish will be the inverse of each other, the better the house, the worse the parish. The less you surround yourself with accommodations, the less you conform yourself to the taste of the multitude; the more exclusively, and the more powerfully, you will do your own work.

"No man has a surplus of power: meaning by power—time, talents, money, influence. There is room for the exercise of all, and more than all, which the most affluent possesses. Perhaps one parish is enough for the full employment of this power; if not, the neighbourhood will take off the redundance; if not, there are three quarters of the world which are heathen, and want his aid. There, at least, is full occupation for the wealth of his mind and his purse. It is, therefore, arithmetically true, that so much as he devotes to the secular object he withdraws from the spiritual. It is not more clear, that a man having a large hungry farm for his livelihood, and a garden for his recreation, that as much manure as he spreads on his garden, of so much he deprives his fields. He grows more flowers and less bread. But this is not all: it is not merely the quantum of his force which he thus wastes; that is the least part of his loss. He touches the world at one point, and the infection reaches him by the contact. If he resembles others in his house, why not in his table? why not in his society! why not in anything, which is not positively wrong?

"Now every word of this sermon is inconsistent with my own practice; but never mind that; truth is truth, whoever speaks it.

"It may be a way—

'Out of this wreck to rise in,
A sure and safe one, though thy master miss'd it.'

"But why do I write all this to you? Solely because I have the highest opinion of you and your powers. I have watched your course now for many years with interest; and I am very desirous that the Rector of A—— should equal the curate of B——. The objects of vulgar care, and the pursuits of vulgar ambition, are not for you. I hope to see in your parish an example of what may be done by a clergyman having talents, income, influence, out of the common order. It just occurs to me that all this may be misapplied, that your house has not, and is not likely to have, a tittle of your affections. Be it so—then give this letter to your housemaid to light your fire with. But if you suspect that you want the friendly freedom of this hint, in the midst of your present prosperity, keep this as a memorial of the attachment of—yours, very truly,

"T. F. BUXTON."

CHAPTER XI.

1826, 1827.

THE year of trial granted by the Government to the Colonial Legislatures suspended during that time all anti-slavery proceedings. This interval was not thrown away —Mr Buxton at once turned his whole mind to a new, though kindred question.

A few months previously, he had received a visit from a gentleman of the name of Byam, who had been commissary-general of the police at the Mauritius, and had come home full of indignation at the abuses he had there witnessed. He asserted that the slave trade was still prevailing in that island to a frightful extent; that the inhabitants and the authorities were alike implicated, and that the labouring slaves were treated with atrocious cruelty; the greater, because their loss could be so easily supplied.

The Mauritius had not been ceded to England by France till 1810, which was three years after the abolition of the British slave trade. It appeared that, partly owing to this circumstance, and partly to the facilities afforded by the proximity of the African coast, the traffic had never been put down in those quarters, except during one or two brief intervals.

To these startling assertions, Mr Buxton could not yield immediate belief; still less could he refuse to investigate them. From Mr Byam, and other individuals, especially General Hall, (who had been a governor of the Mauritius,) he obtained a large mass of documents, and after a long and minute study of their contents, he came to the certain conviction that the charge was true. He was appalled by the greatness of the evil thus unveiled to him. It was no light matter, however, to begin a struggle with a foe so distant and inaccessible, and at first he shrank from the undertaking. But how could he know of such iniquities without standing up against them? At that time he little thought that in six years British slavery would be done away. He expected a far more lengthened contest; and, meanwhile, should these horrors be permitted to continue?—No! A year's leisure lay before him, and, in conjunction with Dr Lushington and others, he took the task in hand.

A plan of operation was soon laid, in accordance with which Mr (now Sir) George Stephen, a stanch and hereditary Abolitionist, took upon himself the labour, demanding no less skill than perseverance, of discovering and examining witnessess.* The first of these was Mrs Byam's English maid-servant, who, while in the Mauritius, had done various little acts of kindness to the slaves.

One incident related by her powerfully affected Mr Buxton. In the middle of the night preceding the departure of Mr Byam's family from the island, she was awakened by a low voice calling to her from without; she rose, and was terrified at finding the whole courtyard filled with negroes. They beseechingly beckoned her to be still, and then, falling upon their knees, they implored her, as she was going to the country of Almighty God, to tell Him of their sufferings, and to entreat Him to send them relief.

On the 9th of May 1826, Mr Buxton brought the Mauritius question before Parliament. In the commencement of

* Mr Buxton used to relate a conversation as having occurred at his own table, in connexion with this question, which much amused him. A gentleman who had been resident in the Mauritius, one day dining with him, laboured to set him right as to the condition of the slaves, assuring him that the blacks there were in fact the happiest people in the whole world. He finished by appealing to his wife. "Now, my dear, you saw Mr T——'s slaves; do tell Mr Buxton how happy they looked." "Well, yes," innocently replied the lady, "they were very happy, I'm sure —— only I used to think it *so* odd to see the black cook chained to the fireplace!"

his speech he reminded the House that the traffic in slaves was by law a felony. "And yet," he continued,—

"I stand here to assert, that in a British colony, for the last fourteen years, except during General Hall's brief administration, the slave trade in all its horrors has existed: that it has been carried on to the extent of thousands, and tens of thousands; that, except upon one or two occasions, which I will advert to, there has been a regular, systematic, and increasing importation of slaves."

He then proceeded to prove this statement, adducing the evidence of one admiral and four naval captains, one general and three military officers, five high civil officers, and two out of the three governors of the island; and then, from calculations which he had very fully and accurately made, he proved every one of the eight distinct heads of accusation which he had brought forward. By a return of the number of the black population in the Seychelles, he shewed that there was only one alternative, either the slave trade had been carried on, or every female in that group of islands must have been the mother of one hundred and eighty children.* He concluded his speech by sketching with a powerful hand the features of the trade which he was attacking—and let the reader, while perusing the following extract, remember, that the same barbarities are going on at this very day, between the West coast of Africa and Cuba.

After describing the system of capture, &c., he said,—

"The fourth step is the voyage, the horrors of which are beyond description. For example, the mode of packing. The hold of a slave vessel is from two to four feet high. It is filled with as many human beings as it will contain. They are made to sit down with their heads between their knees: first, a line is placed close to the side of the vessel; then another line, and then the packer, armed with a heavy club, strikes at the feet of this last line in order to make them press as closely as possible against those behind. And so the packing goes on; until, to use the expression of an eye-witness, 'they are wedged together in one mass of living corruption.' Then the stench is so dreadful that I am assured by an officer, that holding his head for a few moments over the air-hole, was almost fatal to his life. Thus it is that—suffocating for want of air,—starving for want of food,—parched with thirst for want of water,—these poor creatures are compelled to perform a voyage of fourteen hundred miles. No wonder the mortality is dreadful!"

He obtained a select committee to inquire whether the slave trade had, or had not, existed in the Mauritius. But its investigations were soon arrested by the dissolution of

* Hansard, P. D. xv. p. 1030.

Parliament; and in the beginning of June Mr Buxton found himself involved in a stormy election at Weymouth, which at that time, with the united borough of Melcombe Regis, returned four members. The non-electors and the mob were in favour of the Tory candidates, and resorted to main force to prevent the polling of Whig votes;—their plan was, with the aid of a large body of stout Portlanders, to obtain possession of the town hall, at the further extremity of which the booth was placed. No Whig voter reached the table without a violent struggle and very rough treatment. Some were delayed for hours, first by this means, and then by the objections urged by the lawyers; and so great was the success of all this, that on one day but six votes were polled. To remedy in some degree this evil, the mayor extended the hours of polling from four to six o'clock. This measure was extremely unpopular with the mobility of the place, who of course wished the election to last as many days as possible. It was rumoured that an attack on the town hall was in contemplation, and a strong body of cavalry was called into the town. The mob, however, were not dismayed. At four o'clock they assembled in great force, and suddenly rushed with a loud yell upon the door of the town hall. Some passed under the horses of the soldiers, others pressed between them; the ranks of the cavalry were broken, and the crowd poured in. At the same moment a great number of them ran over the leads of the houses adjoining the town hall, lowered themselves from the roof into its upper windows, and came tumbling into the hall in crowds, rushing towards the polling booth with loud shouts, and pressing back the gentlemen to the further end. Most of these scrambled out of the windows at once; a few kept their seats till they were almost suffocated by the mob, but were forced at last to jump from the windows into the arms of their friends below. Subsequently a large number of special constables were sworn in and placed in the hall. On two successive days the mob broke all their staves to pieces, and drove them out with great violence.

Mr Buxton kept himself as clear as possible from these tumults: his own election was throughout secure, and he was personally highly popular. He is described as being

received, even by the Tories, "with loud shouts of approbation; crowds came about him to shake hands; indeed," adds the letter, "he does not appear to have a person against him in the town."

The election lasted fifteen days, at the end of which he was at the head of the poll by a majority of sixty-nine; but the other Whig candidate was defeated, and three Tories came in.

The rest of the year 1826 was chiefly employed in the laborious task of preparing Mauritian evidence for the ensuing session. For this purpose Mr G. Stephen visited every part of England, where soldiers were quartered, who had at any time served in the Mauritius. The depositions of both officers and men, at Hull, Norwich, Liverpool, Chelsea, and other places were taken; thus the testimony was produced of 320 witnesses of good character, who all spoke to the fact of a trade in slaves. Early in 1827 Mr Buxton moved for a renewal of the committee; but, at the request of the Government, his motion was deferred till the 26th of May; and, meantime, he strenuously exerted himself in the further investigation of the case.

In his speech on the 9th of May 1826, he had accused the authorities of the island of culpable neglect. This was highly resented by the late governor, Sir Robert Farquhar, who, in the beginning of May 1827, complained in the House of Commons of the charge, and dared Mr Buxton to the proof. This entailed upon him what he had hoped to avoid, the painful necessity of individual crimination. But he was already almost sinking under the weight of business, and the anxiety with which the whole case was fraught proved at length more than he could bear. His health shewed decided symptoms of giving way, and his physician, Dr Farre, strongly urged him to have recourse to rest and quiet; but he was far too deeply impressed by the sufferings of his unhappy clients, to desert their cause while a particle of strength remained. In spite of the feelings of illness which rapidly gained ground upon him, he spent the week previous to that on which his motion was to come on in severe and harassing labour; and on the Saturday he made a summary of the evidence which had been collected of the atrocious cruelties practised upon the negroes,

both in their importation, and afterwards, when they were reduced to slavery. In the course of that unhappy morning, he was so completely overwhelmed with anguish and indignation at the horrors on which he had been dwelling, that he several times left his papers and paced rapidly up and down the lawn, entirely overcome by his feelings, and exclaiming aloud, "Oh, it's too bad, it's too bad! I can't bear it."

The frightful result which ensued, is thus forcibly described by himself, some months afterwards. :—

. . . . . "Last spring the whole force of my mind, and all my faculties, were engaged in preparing for the Mauritius question. I had pledged myself to prove that the slave trade had existed and flourished in that colony; that the state of slavery there was pre-eminently cruel, and that persons of eminence had tolerated these enormities. It is, I think, but justice to myself to admit, that the object was a worthy one; that I had embraced it from a sense of duty; that my mind was imbued with deep affliction and indignation at the wrongs to which the negro was exposed. I spared no pains, and no sacrifices, in order to do justice to my cause; and the anxiety and labour which I endured preyed upon my health. About the middle of May I went to Upton, in order to improve it by change of air; but I was then under the pressure of disease, and my physician described my state by saying, "you are on fire, though you are not in a blaze." I concealed from others, I did not even admit to myself, the extent of my indisposition. I could not doubt that I felt ill, but I was willing to suppose that these were nervous feelings, the effects of fatigue of mind, and that they would vanish, as they had often done before, when the exertion was at an end.

"On Saturday, May 19, I took a survey of the case of cruelty to the negroes, and for two or three hours I was distressed beyond measure, and as much exasperated as distressed, by that scene of cruelty and horrid oppression. I never in my life was so much moved by anything, and I was so exhausted by the excitement, that I could not that day renew my exertions. The next morning I awoke feeling very unwell. My wife and the family went to a place of worship, and my daughter remained with me; I think, but I have not any clear recollections, that I told her about twelve o'clock to send for Dr Farre. I have a vague idea of my wife's return, but beyond that all is lost to me. The fact was, that I was seized with a fit of apoplexy, and it was not till the following Wednesday that I shewed any symptoms of recovery. I am glad that the first object I noticed was my dear wife. I well remember the expression of deep anxiety upon her countenance, and I am sure I had seen it before. To her delight I spoke to her, and the words I used were those that expressed my unbounded affection towards her. Thanks to her care, joined to that of my brothers and sisters, and of the medical attendants, I gradually recovered. I remember, however, feeling

some surprise, as well as mortification, at finding that the day fixed for my motion on the Mauritius had passed. Then came the slow progress of recovery; we went to Cromer; all my pursuits, such at least as required mental exertion, were given up, but hence resulted some leisure for reflection. I was deeply affected by the love and mercy of God, that he had been pleased to spare my life, that he had not called me suddenly into His presence. I hope and believe that I have not lost the sense of His goodness. I never can advert to this warning without acknowledging from my heart, that His goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life."

So deeply had the subject which caused this alarming illness become rooted in his mind, that almost his first words, on recovering full consciousness, were uttered in a decided tone, to the effect that he must get up and go to the House, to bring forward his motion on the Mauritius. When told that the day was already past, he would not give credit to the statement, till it was put beyond doubt by reference to the newspaper in which the proceedings of the House on the evening in question were reported.

CHAPTER XII.

1827, 1828.

The Mauritius case was of course dropped for the year. Mr Buxton returned to Cromer Hall, and for a long time was obliged to relinquish all sedentary occupation. This interval of unaccustomed leisure was not thrown away; his mind, cut off from its usual employments, turned to reviewing its own state; and while removed from active life, he was in fact strengthening by reflection and prayer those principles from which his actions sprang. Much larger portions of time were given to religious meditation, and to a diligent study of the Holy Scriptures. The marks in his Bible attest his ready application of the Word of God to his own necessities. Dates are placed against many passages and memoranda of circumstances to which they had been particularly appropriate. There also exists a large portfolio full of texts, copied by him and arranged under different heads. He greatly delighted in the Psalms; and on one occasion, when, to use his own words, "some circumstances had arisen which involved him in distress of mind," he thus writes:—

"Finding comfort no where else, I resorted to the Bible, and particularly to the Psalms; and truly can I say with David, 'In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he delivered me.' The Psalms are beautiful and instructive to every man who really studies them; but anguish of mind is necessary to enable us fully to comprehend and taste the pathos and emphasis of their expressions. In David's descriptions of his own anxieties, I found a most lively picture of my own mind. In his eloquent language I uttered my prayers, and, thanks be to God, I was also able to use for myself his songs of rejoicing and gratitude. I have spent some hours almost every Sunday over the Psalms, and I have extracted, under separate heads, David's prayers—his assurance that his prayers were heard and answered—his thanksgivings, &c.; and I meditate, at some future period of leisure, preparing some work for publication on the subject.

"This I may, I believe, say, that these studies have had a strong, and I trust not a transient, effect upon my mind. I recur to the Bible with a pleasure and sometimes with a delight unknown to me before. When I am out of heart, I follow David's example, and fly for refuge to prayer, and he furnishes me with a store of prayer; and I hope 'I love God' better, 'because he hath heard the voice of my supplication; and therefore will I call upon him as long as I live;' and I feel what the text expresses, which I found in my textbook for this day, 'The Lord is my defence, and my God is the rock of my refuge.' And this lesson I have in some degree learnt, that afflictions, as we consider them, are sometimes the chief and the choicest of mercies."

When in Norfolk the woods were his chosen retreat for the enjoyment of the "divine silence," as he called it, of the country. He would take his small well-marked Bible, and wander among the trees reflecting deeply on what he read. Although he never kept a diary, yet after his illness, he was in the habit of frequently committing his thoughts to paper, and a very large number of these communings with his own heart still remain. Many of them are preparations for prayer, according to a habit, which he thus mentions in one of his papers about this period:—

. . . . .

"There is a practice which I have found highly beneficial, and should any of my children ever see this memorial, I earnestly advise them to adopt it.

"I am in the habit of preparing the substance of my private and family prayers. I believe that we are far too extempore in that duty; not that I recommend any verbal preparation, but a meditation upon the points on which we wish to ask the help of God. The want of this seems to me to lead the mind to wander about, and rather to fill our mouths with a train of words to which we are accustomed than our hearts with a sense of our necessities. I, at

least, have found the habit of reflecting on what I shall ask for, before I venture to ask, highly serviceable.

"I am bound to acknowledge that I have always found that my prayers have been heard and answered—not that I have in every instance (though in almost every instance I have) received what I asked for, nor do I expect or wish it. I always qualify my petitions by adding, provided that what I ask for is for my real good and according to the will of my Lord. But with this qualification I feel at liberty to submit my wants and wishes to God in small things as well as in great; and I am inclined to imagine that there are no 'little things' with Him. We see that His attention is as much bestowed upon what we call trifles, as upon those things which we consider of mighty importance. His hand is as manifest in the feathers of a butterfly's wing, in the eye of an insect, in the folding and packing of a blossom,* in the curious aqueducts by which a leaf is nourished, as in the creation of a world and in the laws by which the planets move.

"To our limited powers some things appear great and some inconsiderable; but He, infinite in all things, can lavish His power and His wisdom upon every part of His creation. Hence I feel permitted to offer up my prayers for everything that concerns me. I understand literally the injunction, 'Be careful for nothing, but in everything—make your requests known unto God;' and I cannot but notice how amply these prayers have been met. Grant, then, O Lord, that I may never fail to pour forth all my burthens, cares, wishes, wants, before Thy throne, that I may love to seek Thy help."

About this time Mr Buxton heard, to his great satisfaction, that Lord William Bentinck was appointed Governor-general of India, and immediately went up to town to discuss with him the subject of suttee, and to urge him to employ his authority for the abolition of that atrocious practice. A short time afterwards he addressed the following letter to him :—

"CROMER HALL, *October* 22, 1827.

"MY DEAR LORD,—The short interview which I had with you lately has been to me a matter of sincere gratification. I now feel that I can leave in your hand the question, whether the British Government ought, or ought not, to tolerate the annual sacrifice of several hundred females; and I have the satisfaction of knowing that you will do everything which *ought* to be done. When Mr Canning was going to India, I ventured to trouble him on the business: his answer was the same as I received from you. He assured me that the subject should engage his most serious attention, and that what he could do should be done. I have always lamented that he did not go to India, from a conviction that his great mind would have been ill at ease while such horrid customs as suttee and infan-

* He continually pointed out the packing of buds and leaves as beautiful proofs of the Divine wisdom and goodness; so that Mrs Hoare's children used to call the early spring buds "Uncle Buxton's sermons."

ticide prevailed. Forgive me for saying, that I feel the same confidence in your Lordship as I did in Mr Canning."

It is well known that, soon after Lord William Bentinck reached India, he abolished the practice of suttee at a single blow. Mr Buxton hailed the news with delight and thankfulness. The evil had indeed been extirpated by the hand of another; but he had the satisfaction of feeling that no opportunity had been wasted by him of forwarding that happy event.

In the course of this winter, Mr Buxton was obliged, with much regret, to leave Cromer Hall; the proprietor, Mr Windham, having determined to replace it by a new mansion for his own residence. There was no house equally suitable near Cromer; but being much attached to the neighbourhood and very unwilling to leave it, he gladly accepted Mr R. H. Gurney's offer of Northrepps Hall, which, although smaller than his last place of abode, yet possessed many points of attraction; especially that within a quarter of a mile lived his sister Miss S. M. Buxton, and his cousin Miss Gurney.

Northrepps Cottage, the residence of these ladies, stands in a deep secluded dell, opening on the fishing village of Overstrand and the German Ocean. The path to it from the hall lies through the woods; and thither he always turned his steps when his spirits needed to be enlivened, or his anxieties shared; well knowing that his presence would ever be hailed with eager delight.

He was scarcely settled at Northrepps, when he was called to London to resume his parliamentary labours, which had been so unfortunately cut short in the preceding year. His exertions were first called for on behalf of the West Indies. The year of probation granted by Mr Canning to the Colonial Assemblies had now more than expired; and they had done nothing towards the mitigation of slavery. Of the eight bills recommended for their adoption by Mr Canning, *not one* had been accepted by any colony, except Nevis. But the Government were not yet discouraged; they were still anxious to persuade, rather than to compel. Nor could they be blamed for trying every method of suasion, before resorting to force. The right of the mother country to legislate directly for her colonies had, in one

great instance, been successfully defied. It might, therefore, have been no wise policy to attempt coercion, till all gentler methods had been tried in vain. Accordingly, in 1828, Sir George Murray, as a last experiment, despatched circular letters to all the Colonial Assemblies, once more urging them, in strong terms, to effect for themselves the required improvement in the condition of their slaves. Most truly did Mr Stanley state, in his speech on the 14th of May 1833, that it was not "till all means had been exhausted; till every suggestion had been made; till every warning had been given; and had not only been given in vain, but had been met by the Colonial Legislatures with the most determined opposition, that England took the work of reconstructing West Indian society into her own hands." These circular letters were "entirely disregarded."

Had Mr Buxton been in vigorous health, he would certainly have done what he could to obtain bolder measures from the Government, but his bodily powers failed him.

On the 6th of March, Mr Wilmot Horton brought forward a motion for the publication of some minutes relative "to the Demerara and Berbice Manumission Order in Council," to prove the desirableness of its not being enforced

Mr Buxton had brought together some documents from which to answer Mr Wilmot Horton; but he became so unwell that he was obliged to give up the attempt to peruse them, and went down to the House of Commons without any intention of speaking. To his dismay he found, on reaching the House, that Mr William Smith was the only Abolitionist present beside himself. Mr Wilmot Horton's opening speech was extremely able, and was listened to by Mr Buxton with feelings of real distress, while he looked in vain towards the door of the House, in the hope that Mr Brougham or Dr Lushington might come to the rescue.

At length a bitter tirade against the Abolitionists from one of their opponents stung him to the quick; and he rose to reply, beginning with a somewhat severe comment "on the acrimonious speech of the hon. member for C——, who, after a long lecture on command of temper and control of tongue, has ended," he said, "by charging us with exaggeration, misrepresentation, quackery, and nonsense."

"I must confess, however, that he has sneered at us in very good company; the rights of man and the laws of God were equally visited by his sarcasm. Now, I defy him to prove any one instance of misrepresentation. I challenge him to abstain from general condemnation, and to put his finger upon that particular in which we have deceived the country. I will do so with regard to him—I will mark out those particulars in which he himself has been guilty of misrepresentation."

He then went through the common assertions of the West Indians—they had denied the existence of flogging; of Sunday markets; of obstacles to manumission; he proved, and from the evidence of the West Indians themselves, that these did exist. His opponents were for ever dwelling on the happiness and comfort of their slaves—

"But how comes it," he asked, "that these happiest of the happy decrease at a rate entirely unequalled in the history of man? .... The hon. member has indignantly censured my hon. friend (Mr W. Smith) for introducing the phrases 'rights of men and laws of God;' and I do not wonder that he is somewhat provoked at these obnoxious expressions; for one cannot think of slavery without perceiving that it is an usurpation of the one and a violation of the other. The right hon. gentleman, the mover of this motion, tells us that no one can reconcile the promise we have given for the extinction of slavery with a promise which we have also given for a due consideration of the rights of the parties interested. We are reduced to the alternative, he tells us, of sacrificing the planter to the interests of the slave, or the slave to the interests of the planter. If we are in that predicament, and must decide for the one or the other, my judgment is unequivocally in favour of the slave. And it is a consideration of the 'rights of man, and the laws of God' which leads me to that unequivocal decision."

He concludes in these words:—

"I would give the negro all that I could give him with security; I would do every possible thing to mitigate and sweeten his lot: and to his children I would give unqualified emancipation. Having done this, I would settle with the planters. I am a friend to compensation—but it is compensation on the broadest scale. .... Do you ask compensation for him who has wielded the whip? Then I ask compensation for him who has smarted under its lash! Do you ask compensation for loss of property, contigent and future? Then I ask compensation for unnumbered wrongs, the very least of which is the incapacity of possessing any property whatever. If compensation be demanded, we re-echo the demand. It is that which we most fervently desire; only let it be just compensation, dealt out for the many who have suffered, and not confined to the few who may suffer in one particular."

One of his friends writes to Mr J. J. Gurney:—

"The whole House was carried along by his earnestness, cheered

him vehemently, and listened attentively. He was much congratulated on the success of his reply."

Little more could be done towards advancing the anti-slavery question during this session. Mr Brougham, who had intended to bring it forward, was prevented from doing so by ill health; and Dr Lushington's duties were too onerous to permit of his carrying on the struggle single-handed; but during the last year he and Mr Brougham had been engaged in their arduous contest on behalf of the free people of colour in the West Indies, endeavouring to rescue them from their painful and humiliating position. At length, in the session of 1828, their efforts were crowned with complete success. An Order in Council was issued, by which they were at once placed on the same footing in every respect as their white fellow-citizens; a measure fraught with momentous consequences to the welfare of the West Indies.

On the 20th of March, Mr Buxton had an interview with Mr Huskisson. He offered to put Government into possession of all his documents and evidence respecting the slave trade at the Mauritius, if they would go on with the inquiry, as he was unable to do so, and he strongly urged them to take it up. Mr Huskisson replied, that they would consider about it, and desired that documents relating to the cruel usage of the slaves should be sent to him. He also assured Mr Buxton that the trade was now stopped, that the registry was enforced, and that some Orders in Council would be sent out and put into operation.

No other steps were at present taken by the Government; they had previously sent out a commission of inquiry, and further measures were deferred till its report should have been received.

CHAPTER XIII.

1828, 1829.

ALTHOUGH unable to take much part in public affairs during this session, yet, at the instance of the Rev. Dr Philip of the Cape of Good Hope, Mr Buxton made an effort in behalf of the Hottentots which was crowned with easy and complete success.

Eight years before, Dr Philip had been sent out by the

London Missionary Society, on a deputation appointed to inquire into the state of their missions in South Africa. In the course of these investigations he had become acquainted with the grievous state of degradation in which the Hottentots were held by the inhabitants of the colony, and especially by the Dutch boors. One hundred and seventy years before, they had been the undisturbed possessors of that fertile tract of country which is now comprehended under the name of the "Cape Colony." In 1652, the first Dutch settlement was formed, and the curse of Christian neighbours fell upon the hapless owners of the land.

The first germ of the treatment they met with may be seen in the following extracts from the journal of Van Riebech, the Dutch governor :—

"*December* 13, 1652.

"To-day the Hottentots came with thousands of cattle and sheep close to our fort, so that their cattle nearly mixed with ours. We feel vexed to see so many fine head of cattle, and not to be able to buy to any considerable extent. If it had indeed been allowed, we had opportunity to-day to deprive them of 10,000 head, which, however, if we obtain orders to that effect, can be done at any time, and even more conveniently, because they will have greater confidence in us. With 150 men, 10,000 or 11,000 head of black cattle might be obtained without danger of losing one man; and many savages might be taken without resistance, in order to be sent as slaves to India, as they still always come to us unarmed."

A day or two later we find Van Riebech "wondering at the ways of Providence, which permitted such noble animals to remain in the possession of heathens." It was not long before he thought it best to thwart the ways of Providence instead of wondering at them; and the system which he began was carried out by the Dutch, and afterwards by the English, until the Hottentots had sunk to the lowest depths of misery. Nothing can be more painful than the accounts given of them at the time of Dr Philip's first visit to the Cape. They were not like the negro slaves, the legal property of certain individuals; they were at the mercy of all who chose to oppress them and compel their services: not even possessing that degree of protection which the hateful system of slave ownership affords. Their tribes were public property, and any one might seize as many of them as he pleased for his private use. Their rich lands and vast

herds of cattle had long since become the spoiler's prey. At the caprice of the Dutch boors they were subjected to the heaviest labours, to every species of harassing annoyance, to every kind of revolting punishment. Beneath this grinding misery their numbers had dwindled, their persons had become dwarfed, and their minds brutalised, till the very negro slaves looked down on them as lower and baser drudges, far below the level of mankind.

In 1822 Dr Philip returned for a short time to England, and communicated this information to Mr Wilberforce, Dr Lushington, and Mr. Buxton, who agreed that the former should move in the House for a commission of inquiry to proceed to the Cape; as also to the Mauritius, and to Ceylon: this was accordingly done, and in 1824 we find Mr Buxton moving for the reports received from these commissioners; which afforded some information of value. In 1826 Dr Philip again came back to England, and after a time published his "Researches in South Africa," which excited much attention; and he urged Mr Buxton to bring the case of the Hottentots before Parliament. Although feeling great interest in the subject, Mr Buxton was too deeply engrossed by the Mauritius question to turn aside at that time. In 1828, however, he was able to make himself master of the subject, and gave notice of a motion for an address to the King on behalf of the natives of South Africa.

He writes, July 1828,—

"I have not yet determined what I shall say about the Hottentots. I shall take as the foundation of my argument their legal freedom, prove that they are practically slaves, and demand that we act up to our engagement and make them free; but it is doubtful if I shall speak. Government will probably give way to my motion, on condition that I abstain from speaking. Terms not to be rejected, I think."

To this compromise the Government agreed. Mr Buxton brought forward his motion without a single comment; and Sir George Murray, (Secretary for the Colonies,) then rose and briefly expressed the concurrence of the Government. The address was unanimously agreed to, and the Hottentots were free! Mr Buxton walked up to Dr Philip, after the motion had been carried, and said, "Ah, these men do not know the good they have done!"

In a hasty note to Mrs Upcher, he thus announced the triumph :—

"*July* 17, 1828.

"I have only time to say that we have recorded a resolution of the House of Commons, with regard to the Hottentots, which is their Magna Charta; and which will spread liberty, and, with liberty, a thousand other blessings over that great and growing territory."

THE REV. DR PHILIP TO T. F. BUXTON, ESQ.

"*July* 16, 1828.

"My Dear Sir,—The more I reflect upon the decision of Parliament on Tuesday evening, the more I am struck with its importance. It is intimately connected with all the great questions now before the public, which have for their object to ameliorate the condition of the coloured population in every region of the globe; it is one of the principal stones in the foundation of that temple which Mr Wilberforce has been so long labouring to rear for the protection of the oppressed; and it has given a strength and an elevation to the building, which will render the whole more secure, and its future progress more easy. I wish you could be present at our missionary stations when the glad tidings shall be announced; you would see many a sparkling eye, many a cheek furrowed with tears of joy, and hear your name associated with many a thanksgiving to God for this unexpected deliverance."

It was a singular coincidence that, only two days after this motion had passed in Parliament, Major General Bourke, the just and humane Governor of the Cape, promulgated an ordinance, (well known afterwards as the Fiftieth Ordinance,) by which the Hottentots were placed on the same footing as the other inhabitants of the Colony. As soon as Sir George Murray heard of this step, an Order in Council was issued, (January 15, 1829,) ratifying the ordinance, and, moreover, prohibiting any future alteration of it by any colonial authority. When Mr Buxton, who had spent the autumn and winter at Northrepps, came back to London for the session of 1829, he found the business thus happily concluded.

He sent this intelligence to Mr J. J. Gurney; but begins his letter by alluding to the excitement which prevailed on account of the Duke of Wellington's expressed intention to take into consideration the removal of the Catholic disabilities :—

"*February* 9, 1829.

"We had a slave meeting at Brougham's yesterday; and S. Gurney would go with me, to prevent them from putting too much upon me. Brougham, Mackintosh, Denman, Spring Rice, Wm.

Smith, Macaulay, were the party. They were all in the highest glee about the Catholics; Brougham particularly. They seemed exquisitely delighted with the vexation of the Tories, who are, and have reason to be, they say, bitterly affronted; and the great ones among them vow they will have an apology, in the shape of some good place, or they will never forgive the Duke for letting them go down to the House as strong Protestants, and insisting upon their returning, that very day, stout Catholics! They say they do not mind changing their opinions,—that is a duty which they must sometimes pay to their chiefs,—but they think it hard to be obliged to turn right-about-face at the word of command, without a moment being given to change their convictions.

"The Duke is very peremptory. The story goes, that he said to Mr ——, who has a place under Government, 'We have settled the matter, and hope you like it.' Mr —— said, he would take time to consider it. 'Oh yes! you shall have plenty of time; I don't want your answer before four o'clock to-day. I shall thank you for it then; for, if you don't like our measures, we must have your office and seat, for somebody else.'

"To-morrow we are to have a fierce debate. The High Church party are very furious, and talk of calling upon the country; and I expect we shall have a good deal of bitterness.

"As to slavery, we determined not to fix our plans for a week, in order to see the turn this Catholic business is likely to take, for the House will hear nothing else now; but we are to have a day fixed for Brougham's motion before Easter. He wanted me to begin on the Mauritius; but I said, 'No! if they are not in a temper to hear you, I am sure they will not hear me.'

"Spring Rice said that he had seen General Bourke, late Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, who tells him that Government have sent out an Order in Council, giving entire emancipation to the Hottentots. If this proves true I shall be excessively delighted, and shall never say again that I am sorry I went into Parliament; not that I did much in the business, but I flatter myself I did a little. Do get M. to read Dr Philip's book on South Africa. I think you would not repent if you did the same. I am very well, and in good spirits, though somewhat worried about the tiresome mines, which want attention."

His delight was well-founded. From the day that the Fiftieth Ordinance became law, the Hottentots were raised to the level of their white oppressors, they were protected by the same laws, they could own property, they could demand wages in return for their labour, they could no longer be seized "like stray cattle" if they left their village bounds; in short, they were become a free people; and since that day civilisation and Christianity, with all their retinue of blessings, have flourished among them. For a while dismal forebodings and fierce complaints rang among the Colonists

at this sudden inroad upon their oppressive privileges; but after a few slight commotions, both their anger and their fears died away: and the experience of eighteen years has abundantly approved the wisdom as well as the justice of this important measure.

In 1833 Colonel Bell (the Government Secretary for the Colony) stated that,—

"As to that large proportion of the Hottentots who remained in the service of the Colonists as free labourers, their character and condition are every day improving. Those settled at the Kat River, as small farmers, have made a very surprising progress. A large portion of them, from being an indolent, intemperate, and improvident class, have, since a field was opened for virtuous ambition, become industrious, sober, and prudent in their conduct."

In the same year Captain Stockenstrom (Chief Civil Commissioner of the Eastern Province) writes:—

"The Hottentots at the Kat River have cultivated an extent of country which has surprised everybody who has visited the location. . . . . Instead of apathy or indifference about property, they have become (now that they have property to contend for) as covetous and litigious about land and water as any other set of Colonists. They have displayed the utmost anxiety to have schools established among them. . . . . They travel considerable distances to attend divine service regularly. Their spiritual guides speak with delight of the fruit of their labours. Nowhere have temperance societies succeeded half so well as among this people. They have repulsed all the attacks of the Caffres. They pay every tax, like the rest of the Colonists. They have rendered the Kat River by far the safest part of the frontier. . . . . As far as the land is arable, they have made a garden of it from one end to the other."

According to Colonel Wade,*

"They had, in 1833, completed 55 canals for irrigation, 44 of which measured 24 miles! Their works," said he, "give the best evidence that the Hottentots can be as industrious, and are as capable of contending with ordinary difficulties, as their fellow-men."

Dr Philip had described the Hottentots in bondage, as

"In a more degraded and imbruted state than they were in a state of nature; trampled upon by their masters; held as a perquisite of office by the Colonial Governor; regarded by the negro slaves as only fit to be their drudges; despised by the Caffres, and by all the natives in a state of freedom; and represented by travellers as scarcely possessing the human form, as the most filthy, stupid beings in the world; as scarcely to be considered belonging to the human race."

He thus describes them after their settlement at the Kat River:—

* Evidence before Aborigines' Committee.

"The Kat River now presents a scene of industry, sobriety, and decency, not surpassed by the peasantry of any country in Europe. They are building themselves good houses; they are very decently clothed; their industry is admitted, even by their enemies."

In 1839, Mr Backhouse mentions his having visited the Hottentots, and found them "dressed like decent, plain people of the labouring class in England. In the sixteen schools of the Kat River district, they had about 1200 scholars, and an attendance of about 1000." *

CHAPTER XIV.

1830.

Mr Buxton's own health was much restored during the winter of 1829; but illness in his family caused him severe anxiety. On leaving home, when this was in a great measure relieved, he writes:—

"I was very sorry that I was only able to write that short, shabby letter, which I sent this morning. I never before felt my heart so entirely riveted to home; everything else seems flat, except that centre of my affections.

"But now for a history of my travels. Nurse and I were very good friends, and had some instructive conversation upon the pleasing subjects of wounds, operations, &c.; and I presume I won her heart, as she began and concluded every sentence with, 'My dear sir.' I lapsed, however, at last, into my books. It was a wretched night; but I was none the worse for that, as my greatcoat and snow shoes kept me from cold. I soon set myself to a review of late events, and that led me to go over my list of the mercies which have been granted to me, and a grand list it appears. When I go over it item by item, the account seems surprisingly large. Mercies of all sorts. . . . . Then, children to my heart's content; brothers and sisters the same; friends the same; station in life and circumstances the same; the public objects to which I have been directed the same; and there are fifty other dittos of the same order. Then my own life, so often preserved, and my children, given to me, as it were, a second time. I read some lines lately in one of those wicked newspapers, (as —— called them,) the *Weekly Dispatch*, which I must get hold of again. I forget the lines; but their substance was, that ere long death shall open his casket; and they end thus:—

'Then shall I see my jewels to my joy, my jewels me.'

"Then come personal mercies of the same sort. I have clear, undoubting views of the efficacy of prayer. I know the Holy Spirit will be granted to those who ask for it, and I see wonderful mercy, love, and grandeur developed throughout all creation; and I know

* Backhouse's "Narrative of a Visit to South Africa," p. 186.

that I have a Redeemer! Upon these grounds, and such as these, I am thoroughly thankful, or rather I perceive that I ought to be so.

"These thoughts, and hearty prayers for us all, with a fond recollection of the dear invalids I had left, carried me to Ipswich; and after that I cannot give a very clear account of anything, having fallen sound asleep. The snow became so deep, that we were obliged to part with the guard and the bags, who rattled away in a postchaise and four; while we crawled into the fog of this great town. I dressed at the Brewery; went to Lombard Street, to Macaulay's, and to the anti-slavery meeting, (we are to meet again at Brougham's on Friday evening, I believe; so forgive me for not giving you the history of our proceedings;) then to Dr Lushington; then to the Real Del Monte; then to dinner at the London Tavern by myself; then to the meeting about the Indian widows, from which I have just returned.

"I am really eager to know whether the storm produced any wrecks: I trust it did not; or if it did, that Anna Gurney saved the crew, and is now subjecting them to a second and a greater peril, from repletion at the Cottage. Then the whale; then Cromer Hall;* then Mrs Fry. Why, what a wonderful place Cromer is! This big city cannot supply half as much real important news as little Cromer can furnish.—Your affectionate husband, father, brother, and friend, T. Fowell Buxton."

Again, during a second visit to London :—

"I had a pleasant journey, going outside as far as Bury, for the purpose of satisfying myself with surveying the stars. I never was out on a finer night, or was more sensible of the majesty of the spectacle. A man must preach very well indeed before he conveys such a lesson of the greatness of God, and the unworthiness of man, as a view of the heavens discloses. It always strikes me that such a sight turns into downright ridicule and laughter our (in our own eyes) important pursuits."

TO MRS BUXTON.

"London, *February* 9, 1830.

"I am in good spirits and health, and not without a sense that mercy and truth and love are about me in my solitude before you come. . . . . What a comfort it is to me that you are all going on well. It seems to make all other things easy and light. I have my worries, but I do not regard them. As for the affairs of the mines, which just now are a bit of a torment, I depend upon it, that it will come right; and as to public matters, they are not at my disposal; I can only do my best, and leave the result to Him to whom those good causes belong."

The mining companies alluded to above, to which he belonged, involved him in considerable loss of property, and their affairs were often a subject of anxiety to him. The details would be of course unsuitable and uninteresting to

* This refers to incidents which had recently occurred—the capture of a large whale, and a fire at Cromer Hall.

the general reader; but those who had the opportunity of observing his conduct in these transactions, attest that it eminently displayed his clear judgment, his firmness of purpose, his ability to resist the infection of panic, and his diligent and generous regard to the interests of others.

Another matter of business that occupied him during this spring was the bill for throwing open the beer trade, to which he thus alludes :—

TO JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY, ESQ.

"HOUSE OF COMMONS, *March* 19, 1830.

"I am far from being dissatisfied with the beer revolution. In the first place, I do not know how to be so; I have always voted for free trade when the interests of others were concerned, and it would be awkward to change when my own are in jeopardy. Secondly, I believe in the principles of free trade, and expect that they will do us good in the long run, though the immediate loss may be large. Thirdly, I have long expected the change. And, lastly, I am pleased to have an opportunity of proving, that our real monopoly is one of skill and capital.*

"I have a letter from Calcutta, saying that suttee has been suppressed by Lord William Bentinck. Is not this comforting? I am also not without hopes that Sir G. Murray will do right about my Mauritius slaves. . . . . Peel tells me he is with us about capital punishments, but says 'you must give me time.' On slavery, nothing new. Colonists will do nothing. I am strongly in favour of bolder measures on the part of the Abolitionists, and think they will be taken.

"I am now attending, and (as you may observe) listening to, a debate on the distress of the nation, meaning to vote against the conspiracy of High Tories and Radical Whigs, and in favour of Government."

Our readers will recollect the efforts made in 1821 and the following years for the reform of the penal code. Sir James Mackintosh had continually kept the subject in view, and had made various attempts, but apparently without success, till Mr Peel, after taking office in 1826, commenced his revisal of the code. He cleared the statute-book of many obsolete and barbarous acts, and arranged and consolidated the whole body of criminal laws. In the progress of this great work, Mr Peel introduced, in the year 1830, a bill for the consolidation of the laws relating to forgery. He, however, retained the punishment of death in several cases, and, on this point, a strong opposition was raised in

* Referring some years afterwards to the enormous sum which the twelve largest breweries in London had lost by this beer bill, he remarked, "But it was right; it broke in upon a rotten part of our system—I am *glad* they amputated us!"

Parliament, whilst out of the House, Mr Sidney Taylor effected a change in public opinion through the columns of the *Morning Herald*. It had long been Mr Buxton's opinion that death for injury to property was adverse to the interests, as well as to the feelings, of the commercial world in England. It happened that one Sunday morning during this period, he was visited at breakfast by Mr John Barry, who suggested the extreme importance of getting this feeling formally expressed; whereupon Mr Buxton dictated the following petition:—

"That your petitioners, as bankers, are deeply interested in the protection of property from forgery, and in the conviction and punishment of persons guilty of that crime.

"That your petitioners find, by experience, that the infliction of death, or even the possibility of the infliction of death, prevents the prosecution, conviction, and punishment of the criminal, and thus endangers the property which it is intended to protect.

"That your petitioners, therefore, earnestly pray that your honourable House will not withhold from them that protection to their property which they could derive from a more lenient law."

This form of petition was sent to all the principal towns in the kingdom, and quickly obtained the signatures of firms representing above 1000 bankers.

It was presented on the 24th May by Mr Brougham. Sir James Mackintosh's amendment to abolish capital punishment for forgery, was, however, lost; but immediately after this defeat Mr Buxton returned into the House, and gave notice (in the name of Sir James Mackintosh) of another motion to the same effect on a further stage of the bill. On this debate a majority was obtained against the punishment of death for forgery; and, though this decision was reversed by the House of Lords, the question was virtually settled. No execution has since taken place for forgery in Great Britain.

In succeeding years the infliction of capital penalties was more and more reduced by the efforts of Mr Ewart, Mr Lennard, and others, to whose exertions Mr Buxton always gave, while he remained in Parliament, his strenuous assistance; and it is satisfactory to know that the number of crimes now legally punishable with death is reduced from 230 to eight or nine; and that, practically, no executions now take place in England or Wales, except for murder.

At the close of this summer Mr Buxton was called away from his public duties by the illness of his second son, a youth of great promise, who shewed a tendency to consumption.* When the disease suddenly assumed a very alarming character, Mr Buxton writes, after detailing the circumstances:—

"I felt in the night a deep sense of the goodness of God and unbounded confidence in Him, and was ready to place my child and everything in His hands.

"I awoke in the morning under an overwhelming load of distress; the wretchedness of our present situation burst upon me before I had time to collect my consolations. . . . . My prayer was, first, heartfelt thanks to God for His goodness and mercy; an acknowledgment that He had dealt most lovingly with us in every, every event, an assurance that this stroke, terrible as it seemed, was mercy and love, and I thanked Him for it. Next did I cordially thank Him for Harry's state of mind, so sweet and lovely; thanked Him that he was evidently a lamb of Christ's fold, and prayed that he might be strengthened with might in the inner man. . . . . The text, 'these light afflictions which are but for a moment,' was deeply comforting. Positively, they are heavy, and grievous, and lasting; but compared with the joys of heaven, light, and but for a moment. The apostle must indeed have been inspired when he formed so sublime a conception of God's presence.

"My prayer is, that I may never forget this day's lesson. How have I felt the vanity of all earthly things! How have I panted to become meet for an eternal inheritance! How have I desired for myself, my wife, my children, my friends, that we might here be the servants of God, desiring nothing but to do His will; and that hereafter we might form one band of happy ones redeemed by Christ, and enjoying that blessed country, the least of whose privileges is, that 'there they are no more sick.'

"I pray Thee, most merciful Father, that the lesson of to-day may not be forgotten, that we may ever retain to-day's sense of the difference between temporal and eternal. I pray Thee only make us Thy children, and deal with us as Thou wilt. I give my son unto Thy merciful arms; if Thou wilt, dear Saviour Thou canst make him whole; but Thou knowest best, Thy will be done. If it be possible reserve him for us: oh, how does the flesh desire it; but far, far more do I desire that Thou wouldst keep him and us within Thy fold. Thou didst hear parents' prayers on earth, oh, hear us now; but again I feel, Thy will be done. I bow with entire confidence to Thy decrees; I am sure that Thou wilt do for the best, for never so much as to-day did I know Thee to be merciful and gracious, and very loving to all Thy creatures."

The most lively solicitude and the most sedulous atten-

* Mrs Fry thus mentions him in her diary: "He was a child who in no common degree appeared to live in the fear and love of the Lord; he was cheerful, industrious, clever, very agreeable, and of a sweet person."—(Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 118.)

tion proved to be alike in vain. Though the progress of the disease was extremely slow, it was unremitting, and the nursing of this beloved child became the engrossing occupation of the autumn. The following paper shews that hope had faded away :—

"*September* 19, 1830.

"I beseech Thee, O God, the Creator of the universe, that Thou wouldst grant me a much more lively spirit of godliness, as the one thing which sweetens life, soothes its cares and its bitter disappointments, and which cheers me in a path which needs something to cheer it. Blessed Lord, hear my prayers on behalf of my beloved child. Oh, how do I desire, how earnestly do I crave that Thy choicest mercies and the treasures of Thy love may be showered upon him. Give him, as he walks through the valley of the shadow of death, the light of Thy countenance, the support of Thy strength, and the comfort of his heavenly Father's presence. May it please Thee to impart to him, flying fast to heaven, a foretaste of the joys which Thou hast prepared. The time of tribulation and the hour of death are approaching. Oh, be near him and us in those dark seasons; tell him that Thou art beside him, whisper full consolation in his ear. Let Thy Spirit remind him that he is safe in Thy arms, that nothing can really harm him because Thou art his defender. Unto God's gracious mercy and protection I commit my darling child; the Lord bless him and keep him, lift up His countenance upon him, and give him peace; and, O blessed Lord, make us partakers of the same peace. If, as we believe, in passing from death unto life he shall experience a blessed change, if he is about to enter into the joy of his Lord, if bright scenes of glory, which the dull eye of man hath not seen, are to be his, if he is to spring from languor, and pain, and weariness of the flesh, to perfect peace and joy; if this be the change that awaits him, and surely it is, then let us patiently, nay, joyfully, transfer him from the arms of earthly parents into the arms of his Father which is in heaven."

Being obliged to go up to London on the day succeeding that on which this prayer is dated, Mr Buxton writes in a more cheerful strain to the young invalid :—

"NEWMARKET, *September* 20.

"Here I am, my dear Harry, and I will make use of my pen while tea is brewing. I have had a pleasant journey. To be sure, I could not read, for it grew dark about the time we got to Pearson's; but though I could not read out of a book, I read all the better a sermon out of the stars; and a noble sermon it was—'the heavens declare the glory of God;' and it ended thus, 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him?' One part of the sermon I recollect:—Vanity, vanity, says the Preacher, *all* is vanity.—Nay, there, Solomon, with all your wisdom, you are wrong'! It may be vanity to pursue pleasure, to gratify appetite, or to hunt after renown. It may be vanity to buy fine houses, preserve pheasants, plant trees, acquire an estate with the hills from the Lighthouse to Weybourne for a boundary;

but it is *not* vanity, it is excellent good sense, to serve with the heart and soul, and might and main, the Master and Creator of those heavens; it is *not* vanity to conquer evil passions, and stifle unholy repinings; it is *not* vanity to be patient and submissive, gentle and cheerful, during a long and weary season of trial; it is *not* vanity, in the midst of trials and privations, to spread around a loving and a holy influence, so that the sufferer becomes the teacher and the comforter; comforting us and teaching us that unsafe we cannot be, while we are in the arms of a most merciful and tender Father.' So said the preacher to whom I was listening, and many other things he said, which I forget at this moment, but I recollect he wound up one paragraph thus—'Look at that cluster of stars, conceive the power which framed and the wisdom which guides them, and then say, if you can—I am able to improve upon His dispensations; I can change His decrees for the better; not His will, but mine be done!' I will say no more about the sermon, except that the preacher drew a most striking and lucid likeness of Northrepps, painting to the life each member of the family; so graphic were his touches, that I never felt more strongly what a blessing it is to belong to it. When we had done with the Hall, he sketched the Cottage, and in the gravest manner possible, gave a sly hit or two, which made me smile in the midst of my approval. But now I must conclude. May the God of hope preserve you in all peace; help, cheer, enliven, strengthen you, and gladden you with the consolations which come from Jesus Christ our Lord! Good night, dear Harry, and all at Northrepps."

Under every mitigation which intense parental solicitude could supply, the invalid sank peacefully, and died in the 17th year of his age, on the 18th of November. He was buried in a retired spot within the ruined chancel of Overstrand Church. Upon a tablet is inscribed his name with that of his brother and his four young sisters who had died previously; and the following lines written by his father:—

"Full of bright promise, youthful, courteous, brave;
Grace in the form, mind beaming from the eye;
All that a mother's fondest wish could crave
Were lent awhile by Heaven, and here they lie.

"Here lies the wreck, the spirit wings her flight,—
The ransom'd spirit, to the realms above,
Ranges unfetter'd through the fields of light;
Rests in the bosom of eternal love;

"Beholds the unnumber'd host of angel powers,
Who, round Jehovah's throne, their anthems sing,
And joins that kindred band, those lovely flowers,
Cut down and wither'd in their early spring.

"Scenes by no tear disturb'd, no sin defiled,
Scenes nor by heart conceived, nor tongue confess'd,
Unveil'd to thee, dear spirit of our child;—
And we are comforted, for thou art bless'd."

"NORTHRÉPPS HALL, *January* 30, 1831.

"I feel this morning more than usual dejection, partly occasioned perhaps by the prospect of leaving this quiet place on Tuesday next, and plunging once more into the distracting cares and hurries of

Parliament and business; but still more by a most painful picture which suddenly burst upon me yesterday. I took the boys, Edward, Edmund, and the two Upchers, to shoot on the Warren hills opposite the coast. The ground was covered with snow, the sea was dark and fretful. I went along the lower side, and turned up one of the most distant hillocks, and there I placed myself. And then in a moment a picture burst upon me, which made this one of the most melancholy moments of the last melancholy year. On that same hillock about the same day two years back, I stood. Nature seemed as if she had not changed. The same surface of white beneath my feet, the sea bearing the same blackening aspect, the gamekeepers and dogs in the same hollow, and the boys exhibiting the same eagerness; all was the same with one sorrowful exception. Dearest Harry was nearest to me on the former occasion; his quick eye perceived a wild duck sailing near the sea, and we observed it alighting in a pond near the farm below us. I sent him, full of life and alacrity as he was, to secure the bird, while I stood and watched his manœuvres to get within shot unobserved. Then again his exulting return with the bird in his hand, and the pleasure I felt at his pleasure—and now I could see nothing but the churchyard where his bones repose. Dear fellow! how large a portion of my hope and joy lies there: how has the world changed with me since that hour! But there is this comfort, if we are left to sad recollections, he is gone to eternal security and peace."

CHAPTER XV.

SLAVERY. 1830.

During the last three years the leaders of the anti-slavery movement had been forced into comparative repose; but the movement itself went on. The nation was turning its attention more and more to the question of slavery; inquiring into its true nature, and receiving impressions from the facts and arguments brought forward in the *Anti-slavery Reporter*, and other publications.

At the period we have reached, although in some quarters a clamorous spirit of opposition still prevailed, yet the anti-slavery feeling had been steadily making way. The planters, in fact, by their invincible obstinacy, had chilled the sympathy with which many had been inclined to regard them. They had all along been playing a losing game. The Government would gladly have left the colonial legislatures to work out for themselves the needful reforms in their system: they had hurled back the quiet suggestions of the Government with every expression of defiance and con-

tempt; they had punished the rebel negroes with a severity which shocked every feeling of humanity; they had condemned Smith to the gallows, and thus turned the Independents against them; they forced Shrewsbury to fly for his life, and the Wesleyans were aroused; the Baptist chapels were razed to the ground, and the Baptists became their enemies.

Mr Buxton had early foreseen this result. In his speech on the persecutions of Mr Shrewsbury, he exclaimed—

"Proceed, then, faster and faster; you are doing our work; you are accelerating the downfall of slavery. A few more such triumphs, a few more such speaking testimonies to the merits of your system, and the people of England with one heart will abhor it, and with one voice will dissolve it."

While they were thus exasperating one class after another, the planters stimulated the exertions of their opponents by the vehement abuse which they poured out upon them. To the ceaseless charges of falsehood and hypocrisy, the Abolitionists replied, by laying bare first one and then another feature of the system; and thus a series of impressions was made upon the public mind, which at length wrought a full conviction.

In 1830, these views, which had been slowly expanding, suddenly put on a new and more definite form.

Like all who begin to climb towards great objects of attainment, Mr Buxton had at first taken the lower eminences in the path before him to be the highest it would reach. At first, he had not questioned that emancipation must be a disastrous boon to the blacks, unless previously trained to enjoy it. Thus in his opening speech, in 1823, he expressly said:—

"The object at which we aim is the extinction of slavery. Not, however, the rapid termination of that state—not the sudden emancipation of the negro, but such preparatory steps, such precautionary measures, as by slow degrees, and in the course of years, first fitting and qualifying the slave for the enjoyment of freedom, shall gently conduct us to the annihilation of slavery."

But this declaration had been made seven years before, when, to use his own words, "We did not know, as we now do, that all attempts at gradual abolition are utterly wild and visionary."

Since that time the conduct of the colonists had plainly

shewn, that there was no hope of the negroes being raised to a fitness for liberty, *while they were still slaves.* This could not be done, at any rate, without the hearty co-operation of the planters; and all co-operation the planters had refused. Nay, even had they turned to the work of improving their human property, for the sake of having it taken from them, it may yet be questioned whether the inherent nature of the system would not have forbidden success. Either you must have compulsion, fruitful in abuses, and debasing to character, or you must have the natural and wholesome inducement of wages.

"Slavery," said Mr Buxton upon one occasion, "is labour extorted by force. Wages, the natural motive, are not given, but their place is supplied with the whip. In this House discussions frequently take place as to what slavery is, and what it is not; but one thing it is by the confession of all men—it is labour extorted by force. . . . . Under the most mitigated system, slavery is still labour obtained by force; and, if by force, I know not how it is possible to stop short of that degree of force which is necessary to extort involuntary exertion. A motive there must be; and it comes at last to this—inducement or compulsion; wages or the whip."

The evil, then, being, from its very nature, incapable of much amelioration, and the planters thus set against all reform, it was time for the anti-slavery leaders to relinquish the hope of making mitigation the first step to freedom. Not soon, nor without a struggle, was that hope given up; so plausible does the proposition seem, that "no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom." "Yet this maxim," says an illustrious writer, "is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had learnt to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait for ever!"*

What, then, was to be done? should things be left as they were? To Mr Buxton the answer was plain. He held it to be sheer robbery for one man to hold in bondage the person of another; he thought it a crime in itself; he knew that its offspring was wrong and wickedness; and he could not shrink from the risk of doing it away.

The conviction that slavery could not be slowly modified, with a view to its ultimate extinction, but must be rooted out, and that speedily, wrought a thorough change in the

* Macaulay's "Essays," vol. i. p. 42. "Milton."

policy of the anti-slavery leaders. They had been lopping the branches; they now struck at the root. In 1823 they had sought to better the slave's condition, by lightening some of his burdens. In 1824, the plan was mooted for the purchase, emancipation, and apprenticeship of the negro children. The next three years were spent in discussions on Smith's death and the treatment of the rebel slaves; on the oppression of the free people of colour; on the non-admission of negro evidence; on Shrewsbury's banishment, and the destruction of his chapel. During 1828, 1829, and 1830, the Government had been still vainly striving to induce the colonial legislatures to begin the work of amelioration with their own hands. But a more stirring time was at hand. The Abolitionist party was grown too strong and zealous to shrink from any measures which its leaders might bring forward. In their minds bolder views had ripened, and needed only to be once spoken out in words, to become principles of action. In May 1830, a crowded meeting assembled in the Freemasons' Hall, with Mr Wilberforce in the chair. The first resolution, moved by Mr Buxton, expressed that "no proper or practicable means should be left unattempted for effecting at the earliest period the entire abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions." It was seconded by Lord Milton, who had throughout supported the cause with all the weight of his station and character, though by so doing he had placed himself in opposition to the administration of which his father was a member. Other speeches and resolutions followed in the same strain, till at length Mr Pownall rose to declare in a few vigorous words that temporising measures ought at once to be abandoned. "The time," said he, "is come when we should speak out, and speak boldly, our determination—that slavery shall exist *no longer*." These words embodied the feeling which already pervaded the anti-slavery party, and from this time immediate emancipation became its avowed object.

A meeting held in Edinburgh, in the course of the same year, gave a further impulse to public feeling. After an eloquent address from Mr (afterwards Lord) Jeffrey, urging the meeting to aim at nothing short of "abolishing slavery at the earliest practicable period," Dr Andrew Thomson

broke in with a vehement protest against any further pretexts for delay, exclaiming, "We ought to tell the legislature, plainly and strongly, that no man has a right to property in man,—that there are 800,000 individuals sighing in bondage, under the intolerable evils of West Indian slavery, who have as good a right to be free as we ourselves have,—that they ought to be free, and that they *must* be made free!"

These bold expressions excited such contending feelings, that the meeting broke up in confusion, but only to reassemble a few days later, when, a most eloquent speech having been made by Dr A. Thomson, a petition for immediate emancipation was adopted, to which 22,000 signatures were rapidly subscribed.

But while the Abolitionists were for pushing forwards, and doing what must be done at once, the Government had no desire to accelerate its pace. It was still determined to plod on in the old track; its patience had not as yet been wearied out by the utter hopelessness of the task it had undertaken. It still hoped that the planters might be won over by gentle treatment. No doubt, they had baffled its plans, they had trampled under foot its suggestions; but it was still fain to humour their prejudices and put trust in their good intentions. And even after the accession of Earl Grey to power, there seemed but little chance that the Whig Government, however friendly to emancipation, would undertake its accomplishment. But Mr Buxton would leave no chance untried. Early in 1831 he stated his intention to move a resolution for the complete abolition of slavery, but declared that he would "most readily leave the matter in the hands of Government, if Government would take it up." To this offer no reply was made.

It is to this subject that the following letter alludes, addressed to a member of the administration:—

"*April* 6, 1831.

. . . . . "I feel bound to tell you that, upon the most attentive consideration, I shall feel compelled to withhold my concurrence from any resolutions which do not declare 'the extinction of slavery' to be their object. I am aware that I do not go further in detestation of slavery than his Majesty's Government; but perhaps a long and laborious investigation may have led me to entertain a deeper sense of the practical evils of the system. In my mind, these

amount to nothing short of a crime; and, if it be a crime, the way to deal with it is, not to strip it of some of its worst features, but to abandon it altogether.

"I confess I distrust all ameliorations of slavery. If the Government resolve to undertake them, theirs will be the responsibility; and if they succeed, theirs exclusively the merit.

"I believe their intentions to be perfectly honest, and that they will act resolutely in carrying those intentions into execution. For these and for other reasons, it gives me the greatest pain to be unable to yield my opinions to theirs. I am sure if I act thus, it is not from obstinacy, or from unwillingness to meet their wishes; but it is from fidelity to the cause itself, and to the friends of the cause, to whom I am pledged to bring forward a motion, not for the mitigation, but for the extinction, of slavery. I beg you to believe that it is with reluctance I thus bring myself forward, and that it is only as acting in some sort on behalf of a large body in the nation, that I presume to trouble you beforehand with the line of conduct I shall adopt."

A few days later, in presenting, among 500 petitions against slavery, one subscribed by the Society of Friends, he said :—

"I have great pleasure in presenting this petition from that body; as they were the first persons in the country, who promulgated the doctrine that the buying, selling, or holding of slaves was contrary to the Christian religion. Forty years ago they presented the first petition for the abolition of the slave trade, and eight years ago they presented the first petition for the abolition of slavery." *

It was a part of Mr Buxton's policy to avail himself as little as possible of the evidence furnished by men favourable to emancipation; he always strove to draw his statements from the speeches and writings of his opponents, or immediately from official reports. In this branch of his labours (and it was no small one) he derived much assistance from the great knowledge and practised sagacity of Mr Macaulay, and also from the secretary of the Anti-slavery Society, Mr Thomas Pringle, whose poetical writings are well known. Mr Pringle's originality, his admirable English style, his diligence, tact, and temper, rendered good service to the cause. Being ready to catch a hint from any quarter, they frequently tracked documents of great value into the Colonial Office, and then by reiterated motions Mr Buxton usually succeeded in bringing them to light.

* George Fox (the founder of Quakerism), when in Barbadoes, urged the overseers "to deal mildly and gently with the negroes, and not to use cruelty towards them, as the manner of some has been and is."—(See "A Popular Life of George Fox." C. Gilpin, 1849.)

In this way vast funds of information had been collected; and between the sessions of 1830–31, Mr Buxton ransacked all his stores for evidence relative to the decrease of the slave population. Having completed his calculations, he laid them before the House on the 15th of April.

In the commencement of his speech, he assured the House that he had not the slightest feeling of hostility towards the West Indian proprietors, nor the slightest disposition to cast reproach upon them; and he disclaimed any wish to rest his argument on cases of individual atrocity, though abundance of them might be brought forward.

He proceeds:—

"But, amid the conflicting statements as to the condition of the slaves, it would be extremely desirable to find any fair and unequivocal test of their condition. There is such a test—in the rate at which the slave population has increased or decreased. It is a doctrine admitted by all parties, that, under all circumstances, except those of extreme misery, population must increase. Such is the law of nature, and it is conformable to the experience of all mankind. That law of increase may be interrupted, but it can be interrupted only by causes of extreme misery.

"The question, then, is, whether in the fourteen sugar-growing colonies the slave population has increased, has been stationary, or has decreased? The answer is, it has not increased, it has not been stationary, it has decreased. Not only has it decreased, but it has decreased at a rate so rapid, that I confess it surprises me, and I am sure will astonish the House. In the last ten years the slave population in those fourteen colonies has decreased by the number of 45,800 persons." *

In Tobago, within ten years, one-sixth of the slave population had perished. In Demerara it had diminished by 12,000, in Trinidad by 6000, within twelve years. "The fact is," he said, "that in Trinidad, as the late Mr Marryat observed, 'the slaves die off like rotten sheep.'" These diminutions were exclusive of manumissions.

He then shewed that, while in slavery the numbers of the negroes decreased thus rapidly, in freedom they were doubling. For example, the *free* black population of De-

* In 1835 numerous papers relating to the statistics of the colonial dependencies of Great Britain were ordered by the House of Commons to be printed. Among them appeared some tables, which shewed the yearly decrease of the slave population in eleven West India Islands, during a period of twelve years previous to emancipation. They differ in some degree from those on which Mr Buxton founded his argument, but they give a *still greater decrease*. By these tables it appears that in those *eleven* islands the decrease in the number of slaves (exclusively of manumissions) had been 60,119.—(See Parl. Papers, in the Appendix.)

merara had (exclusive of manumissions) been increased by half in fourteen years. And the free negroes of Hayti had increased by 520,000 in twenty years, that is, their numbers had more than doubled:—

"Now, sir," he continued, "if the blacks in slavery had increased as the free blacks have increased, the slave population should have added in the last ten years 200,000 to its numbers; whereas that number has been diminished by 45,000. To keep *pari passu* with the free blacks, the blacks in slavery should have increased 20,000 a year; whereas they have decreased 4000 a year. They should have increased fifty a-day, whereas they have decreased ten a-day. For this effect, this striking exception to the universal law of nature, there must be a specific cause. It could not occur by accident. What *is* the cause? I will tell the House what it is *not*. It is not, as it has been affirmed to be, any disproportion between the sexes; any deficiency in the number of females. In 1814, the number of female slaves exceeded that of males by 5000. The cause, therefore, of this decrease in the slave population, is not any disproportion between the sexes; it is not war sweeping away its thousands; it is not climate; it is not soil. If any one thinks that the last two circumstances may operate injuriously upon the slave population, I ask him why, under the same circumstances, the free black population has so much increased? Sir, the real cause is *the forced labour in the sugar colonies*, and nothing else. The law of nature would be too strong for any other cause. It is too strong for climate—witness Bencoolen. It is too strong for war—witness Africa. It is too strong for savage life—witness the Maroons of Jamaica. It is too strong for vice and misery—witness Hayti. All such impediments yield to the law of nature; but the law of nature yields to the cultivation of sugar in the sugar colonies. Where the blacks are free, they increase. Climate, soil, war, vice, misery, are too feeble to withstand the current of nature. But let there be a change in only one circumstance; let the population be the same in every respect, only let them be slaves instead of freemen, and the current is immediately stopped.

"I hope the resolutions I intend to submit will appear temperate, although in them I declare myself no friend to ameliorating measures, in which I have no faith. I do not think that by such measures the mortality can be repressed. Besides, sir, I must tell you that I look upon the enslaving of our fellow-men as a crime of the deepest dye; and I therefore consider that it should be dealt with, not by palliatives, but by destroying it altogether."

He concluded by moving the following resolutions:—

"That, in the resolutions of May 1823, the House distinctly recognised it to be their solemn duty to take measures for the abolition of slavery in the British colonies; that, in the eight years which have since elapsed, the colonial assemblies have not taken measures to carry the resolutions of the House into effect; that, deeply impressed with a sense of the impropriety, inhumanity, and injustice

of colonial slavery, this House will proceed to consider of and adopt the best means of effecting its abolition throughout the British dominions."

The motion was seconded in an able speech by Lord Morpeth.

Lord Althorp stated that, although he could not consent to this motion, he thought it was time "to adopt other measures with the colonists than those of mere recommendations," and that he should propose that a distinction in the rate of duties should be made in favour of those Colonies which should comply with the wishes of Government as to amelioration. After an animated discussion, the debate was adjourned. Mr O'Connell, who throughout gave a steady and energetic support to the anti-slavery cause, came across the House, and said, "*Buxton, I see land.*" The prognostic was true; for although, owing to the dissolution of Parliament, the debate was not resumed, and the motion therefore dropped, yet to the argument founded upon the decrease of population may be attributed more than to anything else the speedy downfall of slavery. The force of that argument was well understood in Parliament; accordingly it was vigorously sifted by the opposite party; but, having been drawn from the returns of registration sworn to by the planters themselves, it was found impossible to shake it. The appalling fact was never denied, that at the time of the abolition of the slave trade, in 1807, the number of slaves in the West Indies was 800,000: in 1830, it was 700,000. That is to say, in twenty-three years it had diminished by 100,000.

It may here be well to mention, though it be in anticipation of our history, how fully Mr Buxton's inferences were confirmed by subsequent events. In 1834 emancipation took place, the law of nature resumed its force, the population began to increase, and the census in 1844 proves that in the twelve previous years the black population in fourteen of the islands had *increased* by 54,000.*

The Abolitionists are often blamed for the present want of labour in the West Indies. It should be remembered,

* Not more than fourteen of the islands sent in their returns of population. Had they been received from the whole twenty-one, the increase would of course have been far greater, especially as Jamaica is not included. —(See Parl. Papers in the Appendix to the 8vo edition.)

however, that had slavery not been abolished, the population (taking the decrease at its average rate before emancipation) would by this time have *diminished* by much more than 100,000, instead of having *increased* in the same proportion.

CHAPTER XVI.

1831.

IN June 1831, several members of the Government, and other gentlemen, came to look over the Brewery in Spitalfields, and afterwards dined there with Mr Buxton, professedly on beef-steaks, cooked in one of the furnaces. Mr J. J. Gurney gives the following account of the party:—

"EARLHAM, 12 mo. 23d, 1831.

. . . . "The Premier, grave and thoughtful as he seemed, did great justice to our dinner. 'Milord Grey,' cried the Spanish General Alava to him, as he was availing himself of a fresh supply of beef-steaks (pronounced by the Lord Chancellor to be 'perfect,')—'Milord Grey, vous êtes à votre *sixième*.'

"The contrast between Lord Grey and Alava was curious; the former, the dignified, stiff, sedate British nobleman of the old school; the latter, the entertaining, entertained, and voluble foreigner. He had been the faithful companion of the Duke of Wellington through most of his campaigns, and now had displayed his usual energy by coming up all the way from Walmer Castle, near Dover, in order to help in devouring the product of the stoke-hole in Spitalfields.

"The Lord Chancellor was in high glee: he came in a shabby black coat and very old hat; strangely different from the starred, gartered, and cocked-hat dignity of the venerable Premier. . . . . It was my agreeable lot to sit between Lord Grey and Dr Lushington, and the latter being occupied by his friend on the other side, I was left to converse with the Premier, which I had the pleasure of doing for nearly two hours. . . . . We talked of his long political course, and Lord Shaftesbury, who sat next to him, on the other side, complimented him on the subject.

"Lord Grey. 'I came into Parliament for Northumberland when I was two-and-twenty, and I have been forty-five years a senator.' Of course it was easy to draw the inference that he was sixty-seven years of age. On my expressing the interest I felt for him, and even sympathy, under the burthen he was bearing, he replied, 'I am much too old for it. I would have refused the undertaking, if I could have done so consistently with my duty.'

"Our next subject was parliamentary eloquence. I asked him who, amidst the vast variety of orators whom he had been accustomed to hear, appeared to him to be the best speaker and most able debater.

"Lord Grey. 'Beyond all doubt and comparison, Fox. His elo-

quence was irresistible. It came from his heart, and produced a corresponding effect on the hearts of his hearers.'

"I asked his opinion of Sheridan. The answer was, 'He was very able, but could not speak without preparation.'

"I ventured to insinuate that there was no part of a Premier's office more responsible than that of making bishops. He assented, adding, 'You know I have had none to make at present.' We talked of the Bishop of Norwich*. Lord Grey expressed his admiration of his conduct and character, though he only knew him in his public capacity. 'I fear the bishop is too old to accept any offer that I can make him, but I assure you that the very first and best thing that I have to give away shall be at his service.'

"This declaration has since been fully verified, by his offering to the Bishop the see of Dublin, which the latter, as had been anticipated, refused; observing, in the words of old Erasmus to the Emperor of Austria, that dignity conferred upon him would be like a burden laid on a falling horse, 'Sarcina equo collabenti imposita.'

"When the dinner was ended, I quitted my post by Lord Grey, and joined Buxton, Lord Brougham, and the Duke of Richmond, at the top of the table. Buxton was telling a story on the subject of reform (the only way in which that subject could be mentioned, as the dinner was not political, and Tories were present). 'A stage coachman,' said he, 'was driving a pair of sorry horses, the other day, from London to Greenwich. One of them stumbled, and nearly fell. 'Get up, you *borough-mongering* rascal, you!' said the coachman to the poor beast, as he laid the whip across his back.' The Chancellor laughed heartily at this story. 'How like my Lord —— there was the old horse!' said he to me, laughing, and putting his hands before his face,—Lord —— sitting opposite to us.

"Buxton now left us, to talk with Lord Grey, whom he very much delighted by praising Lord Howick's speech upon slavery. It was a speech which deserved praise for its honesty and feeling, as well as for its talent. But the old Premier seemed to think that his son had been carried by his zeal rather too far.

"Something led us (Lord Brougham and myself) to talk about Paley, and I mentioned the story of his having on his deathbed condemned his 'Moral Philosophy,' and declared his preference for the 'Horæ Paulinæ' above all his other works. This led Brougham to speak of both those works. 'Did you ever hear that King George III. was requested by Mr Pitt to make Paley a bishop? The King refused; and taking down the 'Moral Philosophy' from the shelf, he shewed Pitt the passage in which he justifies subscription to articles not fully credited, on the ground of expediency. 'This,' said the King, 'is my reason for not making him a bishop.' Lord Grey overheard the Chancellor's story, and confirmed it; 'but,' added the Chancellor, 'I believe the true reason why George III. refused to make Paley a bishop was that he had compared the divine right of kings to the divine right of constables!' . . . . The Chancellor was very cordial, and we were all delighted with his entertaining rapidity of thought, ready wit, and evident good feeling. Nor was it pos-

* Dr Bathurst.

sible to be otherwise than pleased with all our guests, with whom we parted, about eleven o'clock at night, after a flowing, exhilarating, and not altogether uninstructive day."

Mr Buxton subjoins,—

"Our party at the Brewery went off in all respects to my satisfaction. Talleyrand could not come, having just received an account of Prince Leopold being elected king of Belgium. Brougham said this was a severe disappointment, as his Excellency never eats or drinks but once a day, and had depended on my beef-steaks.

"The party arrived at about six o'clock, and consisted of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Grey, Duke of Richmond, Marquis of Cleveland, Lords Shaftesbury, Sefton, Howick, Durham, and Duncannon, General Alava, S. Gurney, Dr Lushington, Spring Rice, W. Brougham, J. J. Gurney, R. Hanbury, &c., twenty-three in all.

"I first led them to the steam-engine; Brougham ascended the steps, and commenced a lecture upon steam-power, and told many entertaining anecdotes; and when we left the engine he went on lecturing as to the other parts of the machinery, so that Joseph Gurney said he understood brewing better than any person on the premises. I had Mr Gow up with his accounts, to explain how much our horses each cost per annum; and Brougham entered into long calculations upon this subject. To describe the variety of his conversation is impossible—

'From grave to gay, from lively to severe.'

"At dinner I gave but two toasts, 'The King,' and 'The memory of George III.,' whose birthday it was. We had no speeches; but conversation flowed, or rather roared like a torrent, at our end of the table. The Chancellor lost not a moment; he was always eating, drinking, talking, or laughing; his powers of laughing seemed on a level with his other capacities. . . . .

"Talking of grace before dinner, he said, 'I like the Dutch grace best; they sit perfectly still and quiet for a minute or two. I thought it very solemn.' Again, 'I am a great admirer of the Church; but the clergy have one fault—they grow immortal in this world. You cannot think how they trouble me by living so long. I have three upwards of ninety years old; bedridden, bereft of understanding, incapable of enjoyment, and of doing duty; but they will live, and are keeping men I long to provide for out of their benefices. There's —— and ——; I am waiting for an opportunity of shewing that I do not forget them, but these old gentlemen thwart me: surely there is no sin in wishing that they were gathered to their fathers.'

"We then talked about the Court of Chancery, and I said, 'I hope to see the day in which you shall be sitting in your court, and calling for the next case, and the officer of the court shall tell you that all the cases are disposed of: that will be the most glorious hour of your life.' 'Well,' said he, 'that you shall see, and see it, too, before the close of the session. Depend upon it there shall not be an appeal case in the House of Lords in two months' time!'

"He inquired the wages of the draymen. I told him about 45s.

weekly; and we allow them to provide substitutes for a day or two in the week; but we insist on their paying them at the rate of 26s. per week. 'Yes,' said he, 'I understand; these rich and beneficed gentry employ curates, and the curates of the draymen get about as much salary as those of the clergy.'

"After dinner we took them to the stables to see the horses. Somebody said, 'Now the Lord Chancellor will be at a loss; at all events he knows nothing about horses.' However, fortune favoured him, for he selected one of the best of them, and pointed out his merits. Some one proposed that he should get upon his back, and ride him round the yard, which he seemed very willing to do; and thus ends my history of the Lord Chancellor.

"Lord Grey looked care-worn, but was remarkably cordial."

One of his nephews had joined in a school outbreak. Mr Buxton thus writes to his father:—

"NORTHREPPS, *January* 8, 1832.

"Your letter reached me to-night, and I lose no time in answering it.

"As for the '*insurrectionary movements*,' if you did not take them so seriously, we should rather be inclined to smile at them. Let me ask you one plain question. Do you really think one bit the worse of the boy for having been one of these rebels? I do not. Non-resistance to oppression, or supposed oppression, built upon a deep investigation of the tenor of Scripture, and upon the spirit evinced by the Author of Christianity, is a very high attainment: it is not to be expected from a lad of his age. Again, it is of all things the most difficult to stand against the current of popular feeling, especially where the motive for doing so may be misconstrued into timidity and truckling.

"In short, if I were his father, I should affectionately and gently remind him, that his fault consisted in a departure from the principles which his parents held. I should instil into his mind, that it was more noble to stand alone, maintaining that course which they would approve, than to perform the most gallant insurgent exploits; and I should give him to understand, that I expected to hear no more of such proceedings: and, in my own heart, I should be quite at ease on the subject. I certainly should send him back again. I would give the school another trial, and I should whisper in the master's ear, that if another rebellion took place, *it must be the fault of the system.*

"The only thing about which I should feel any serious apprehension, would be lest the boy should get indirect praise for his high spirit. I speak from experience. When I was a boy I obtained what then appeared to me to be the glorious discredit of being high-spirited and haughty, and careless of consequences. There is something in this to please the fancy and excite the pride of a boy; and this character, which stands upon the borders of good and evil, made me very fierce and tyrannical. I say this the more freely, because I think I discern in his mother's letters a great deal of sorrow and apprehension at top, but underneath a little secret, sly satisfaction

at her boy's spirit. I send him my love and a sovereign; and, if you like, you may read him what I say, as to the more noble and manly part, which we expect him hereafter to take."

TO HIS ELDEST SON, AT TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

"DEVONSHIRE ST., *May* 15, 1832.

"My mind has much turned towards you of late, and I have thought more than you might suppose of your approaching examination. Not that I am very solicitous about the result, except so far as your heart may be set on success. I should be very sorry to have you damped and disappointed, but for myself I shall be just as well satisfied with you, if you are low in the last class, as if you are high in the first.

"But I have a piece of advice to give you with regard to the examination, which I am sure will, if attended to, be of service; and if you remember it, and act upon it, it will be useful, whenever, during your future life, you are about to engage in anything of more than usual importance. Go to God in prayer; lay before Him, as before your wisest and best friend, your care, your burthen, and your wishes; consult Him, ask His advice, entreat His aid, and commit yourself to Him; but ask especially, that there may be this restraint upon the efficacy of your prayers,—that His will, and not your wishes, may govern the result; that what you desire may be accomplished, provided He sees it to be best, and not otherwise.

"The experience of my life is, that events always go right when they are undertaken in the spirit of prayer. I have found assistance given and obstructions removed, in a way which has convinced me that some secret power has been at work. But the assurance of this truth rests on something stronger than my own experience. Scripture is full of declarations of the prevalence and efficacy of prayer, and of the safety of those who resort to it. 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass.' 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.' 'Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He will strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.'

"It is not often I give you my advice; attend to it in this instance. Depend upon it, prayer is the best preparation you can have for your examination, and for everything else."

CHAPTER XVII.

WHEN the session of 1832 commenced, the nation was shaken to its centre by the closing struggle on the reform question. The attention of all parties was, however, for a time recalled to the subject of slavery; first, by the violent irritation expressed in the colonies at the declaration of Lord Althorp in the preceding year, that he would "in-

sist on the enforcement" of ameliorating measures,* and at the consequent order in council issued, with a despatch from Lord Goderich, in November; and secondly, by the news of an alarming insurrection among the negroes in Jamaica, who, from hearing the indignant expressions of their masters against the home government, conceived that "free paper was come," and had been suppressed by the planters. An attempt was made by the latter to implicate the missionaries and some of the clergy in the rebellion of the slaves, and Messrs Gardner and Knibb were actually arrested on the charge, and indictments made out against them. The case, however, against the former completely broke down, and the Attorney-General abandoned the charge against the other. In fact, not one tittle of evidence was ever adduced against them.

An animated public meeting was held on the 12th of May, at which the venerable Mr Stephen presided. Mr Buxton concluded the address which he made on the occasion, in these emphatic words:—

"When I call to mind the fact that, contrary to the law of nature, in a country friendly to the increase of population, it has diminished with such frightful rapidity, I would tell all who countenance such a system, that they will have to account at a solemn tribunal for the 50,000 murders that have been committed through its agency. When I think of this, and of the cart whip, and of the millions of stripes inflicted by that accursed instrument, I am at a loss for words to express my feelings. When I trace the system through its baleful ramifications, when I contemplate this hideous cluster of crimes, there is but one language, the language of divine inspiration, that can convey what passes within me. 'They are a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison-houses; they are for a prey, and no man delivereth, for a spoil, and no man restoreth.' When we look at the career of affliction of our brother man, for, after all, he is our brother, moulded in the same form, heir to the same immortality, and, although in chains and in suffering, on a level, in the eyes of God, with the proudest noble in that committee which has been appointed to sit in judgment upon him; when I view him entering life by the desert track of bondage; when I view him writhing under the lash of his tormentor; when I see him consigned to a premature and unregarded grave, *having died of slavery;* and when I think of the preparation which we, good Christian men and women, have enabled him to

* April 15, 1831. Hansard. At one of the public meetings of the planters in Jamaica, this determination of the Government was affirmed to be "unjust and inhuman," while the allegations of the anti-slavery party were stigmatised as "the false and infamous representations of interested and infuriated lunatics."—(See the "Life of Wm. Knibb," p. 111.)

make for his hereafter, — there can be but one feeling in my heart, one expression on my lips: 'Great God! how long, how long, is this iniquity to continue?'"

The position in which the Government, the West Indians, and the Abolitionists stood to each other in 1832 was nearly that of equilibrium. The Abolitionists had received a considerable accession of parliamentary force in the late general election, many of the candidates having pledged themselves to take the anti-slavery side. With his hands thus strengthened, Mr Buxton determined to press forward again the resolutions moved in the preceding year, aiming at an abolition of slavery at once speedy and safe. But to this idea of speedy emancipation the ministers were by no means prepared to yield, though they fully admitted the principle that slavery should be finally abolished.

In the first place, they felt the responsibility which makes men in power so often shrink from a hardy policy. In the second, they were compelled to consult for their own preservation, by conciliating the West Indian party. The immense parliamentary strength of that body must be borne in mind, if we would understand the varied and often baffled course of the anti-slavery movement during this and the ensuing year. The fact was, that many of the great landowners at home held colonial property also, and inherited with it a natural hatred of that "reckless enthusiasm," which was bent on taking away their slaves. It was, therefore, the policy of the Government to avoid bringing the anti-slavery question to a crisis; to keep it at arm's length; and, by preventing it from coming to the test of a division, to escape committing themselves to either one or the other of the opposing parties.

Against such a policy it behoved the negro's advocate to stand firm. But this was rendered the more difficult to Mr Buxton, by his hearty attachment to Whig principles, and by his personal regard for many members of the Cabinet. Besides, he looked upon the maintenance of the Whig ministry as of almost paramount importance to his own cause. By these contending considerations the perplexities of his course were greatly increased; but he daily became more impressed with the necessity of vigorous and speedy measures. Deeply versed in the state of the West Indies, it was to him a

thing plain and undoubted, that no policy could be so pernicious as that of hesitation and delay. He thought that the dangers of rapid emancipation were not nearly so great as they were held to be. He believed that a good police and kind treatment would suffice to prevent those "frightful calamities," (the result of such an act,) which Sir Robert Peel "shuddered to contemplate." He boldly stated his belief that the negroes would go to work for wages, as soon as they were released from the terrors of the whip. And that at any rate the Legislature would find it the most hopeless task in the world to do what Lord Althorp called "employing itself most usefully in bringing the slaves to such a state of moral feeling as would be suitable to the proposed alteration in their condition."

The statistics which he had brought forward in the previous year, appeared to him to demonstrate the utter folly, as well as the utter cruelty of slavery. A system that was killing off the labourers of the colonial islands at such a fearful rate could be of no real good to any one. The best thing to be done, as he thought, would be to get rid of it at once, whatever the cost might be.

If experience could prove anything, it seemed to him to prove the necessity of a thorough change of policy with regard to slavery. For nine years the Government had been trying the gentle means indicated by the resolutions of 1823; yet the state of the slaves was not a whit better than it had been nine years before. The mortality was advancing with the same rapid strides. Nay, in Demerara, Essequibo, Jamaica, St Christopher's, and St Vincent, the official returns shew that the loss of life was greatest *in the last three* of the twelve years during which those returns of population were made. The punishments officially reported had never reached a more appalling number. The cases of individual cruelty brought to light in many quarters, but especially in the reports of the protectors of slaves, were as startling and as rife as ever. And as for religious instruction, the rancour of the planters against it, justified by their own doctrine, that it "is incompatible with the existence of slavery," had grown stronger and more violent year by year. Besides this tried hopelessness of producing any real effect by mitigatory measures, there was another still

weightier reason for not delaying the day of freedom. In this case, most surely, would indecision be decisive. A moral effect had been produced by the prolonged discussions of the question. The planter had been exasperated to the highest pitch of indignation; the slave had learnt reflection, but not self-control. A deadly breach lay between them; and already had some mutterings been heard of the storm, which would surely burst with terrific fury, if steps were not quickly taken to turn its wrath aside.*

This, then, was the meaning of the struggle we are about to describe. The Government wished to aim at nothing beyond *mitigating measures*, such as had been proposed in 1823. Mr Buxton was resolved to insist upon the *abolition of slavery*.

The Government first strove to prevent him from bringing his motion forward. Failing in this, they endeavoured, and with success, to add to the resolution which he proposed, the words, "conformably to the resolutions of 1823." To this he offered a strenuous resistance; and persisted in dividing the House, so as to compel it to declare in the face of the nation, what it really meant to do on this great question.

The following letter†, written by his eldest daughter to the inmates of Northrepps Cottage, gives the details of all that occurred:—

"The debate ‡ has at length actually taken place, and great cause have we to be satisfied with the result, now that we are safe on the other side of it. It is difficult exactly to recall the feelings and opinions of the preceding days; it was, however, the usual course,—every possible assault from friend and foe to *make* my father put off his motion, and when that was found hopeless, to induce him to soften it down, or not to divide the House. Dr Lushington was of opinion that it would endanger the cause to persevere, and difference of opinion with him is worse than anything to my father. The Government were also most pressing, and the terms they offered extremely tempting. On Tuesday morning my father and Dr Lushington were a long time with Lord Althorp and Lord Howick, both of whom used every argument and almost every entreaty. I believe he did not reply much at the time, but was cruelly beset,

* This idea of a general revolt of the negroes was a source of constant distress to Mr Buxton. "The gun is cocked and on the shoulder," said he, with great emphasis, in speaking of the subject to one of his friends.

† This is the first of a series of letters, addressed to the same individuals, to which we shall have frequent occasion to refer.

‡ May 24.

and acutely alive to the pain of refusing them, and, as they said, of embarrassing all their measures, and giving their enemies a handle at this tottering moment. They said, besides, that the public were so occupied with reform, that it was only wasting the strength of the cause; nobody would listen, and the effect would be wholly lost, whereas, if he would wait a little, they would all go with him; their hearts were in fact with him, and all would be smooth, if he would have a little reason and patience. On his return he related all this to us, and proposed writing a letter to Lord Althorp, previous to the final interview, which was to take place the next day. So a letter was written, which I will copy:—

"'TO LORD ALTHORP.

"'*May* 22, 1832.

"'My Lord,—I am fearful lest I should have failed in conveying to you, at least in their force, the impressions under which I am acting. The fact is, from the study I have given to the subject, I am so deeply sensible of the practical, as well as the inherent horrors of the system, and of the persecution and cruelties which are daily going on, that it is *impossible* for me to let this opportunity pass over, without at least bearing my testimony against them. Allow me, moreover, to remind you, that, however insignificant in myself, I am the representative, on this question, of no mean body in this country, who would be, to an extent of which, I believe, you have no idea, disappointed and chagrined at the suspension of the question. But further, (and this is a consideration far more really influential on my conduct,) I cannot but feel myself the representative of a body who cannot speak for themselves, and for whom I must act without other guide than my own conscience. There is nothing, whatever may be the result of my motion, which I should look back upon with so much regret, and I may add, shame, as the having, in any measure or degree, slighted their interest for my own convenience, or that of my friends in England, more particularly as those friends are powerful and important, while those for whom I am acting, however feebly, are helpless and oppressed. In short, I believe it to be most for their advantage that I should bring on my motion, and therefore I am necessitated to say candidly, that I cannot either postpone it or substitute for it anything short of abolition. To say, I do *most reluctantly* anything that can possibly inconvenience the present Ministry, is needless and useless.

"'I am, my dear Lord, with great esteem and respect, yours most faithfully, 'T. F. BUXTON.'

"It was early on the Wednesday morning that this letter was sent, and in the afternoon he went again to Lord Althorp, who immediately gave him to understand that he saw it was of no use attempting to turn him, and that he gave him every credit for his motives. Accordingly they resolved on their several courses, the motion, and the amendment. Thursday morning, May 24th, came. My father and I went out on horseback directly after breakfast, and a memorable ride we had. He began by saying that he had stood so far, but that *divide he could not.* He said I could not conceive the pain of it,

that almost numberless ties and interests were concerned, that his friends would be driven to vote against him, and thus their seats would be endangered. But then his mind turned to the sufferings of the missionaries and of the slaves, and he said after all he must weigh the *real* amount of suffering, and not think only of that which came under his sight; and that if he were in the West Indies, he should feel that the advocate in England ought to go straight on, and despise those considerations. In short, by degrees, his mind was made up. When we got near the House, every minute we met somebody or other, who just hastily rode up to us. 'Come on to-night?' 'Yes.'—'Positively?' 'Positively;' and with a blank countenance, the inquirer turned his horse's head, and rode away. I do not know how many times this occurred. In St James's Park we met Mr Spring Rice, whom he told, to my great satisfaction, that he positively *would* divide. Next Sir Augustus Dalrymple came up to us, and after the usual queries, said, 'Well, I tell you frankly I mean to make an attack upon you to-night.' 'On what point?' 'You said, some time ago, that the planters were opposed to religious instruction.' 'I did, and will maintain it.' We came home, and dined at three. It is difficult to recall, and perhaps impossible to convey to you the interest and excitement of the moment. Catherine Hoare, R., and I, and the little boys, went down with him. We were in the ventilator by four o'clock; our places were therefore good. For a long time we missed my father, and found afterwards he had been sent for by Lord Althorp for a further discussion, in which, however, he did not yield. Many anti-slavery petitions were presented; the great West Indian petition by Lord Chandos. At length, about six, 'Mr Fowell Buxton' was called: he presented two petitions, one from the Archbishop of Tuam and his clergy, and the other from the Delegates of the Dissenters in and near London. The order of the day was then called, and he moved his resolution, which was for a committee 'to consider and report upon the best means of abolishing the state of slavery throughout the British dominions, with a due regard to the safety of all parties concerned.' He spoke very well indeed, and they listened to him far better than last year; in short, the subject obviously carried much greater weight with it, and the effect of the speech last year on population was manifest, as indeed it has been ever since. He touched on that subject again, and alluded to his statement, which he was happy to see in the hands of honourable members (he had sent it round to each, a day or two before, signed by himself; and there were many of them looking at it while he was speaking). I was very much pleased to see it in their hands. I will not, however, attempt to go over the debate, or to relate the speeches. Mr Macaulay's was strikingly eloquent. Lord Howick's capital, and giving such a testimony to the speech of last year as delighted me. He said, it had indeed startled him, and that he had examined into all the facts, which he found undeniable; he evidently spoke under the effect of the impression it had made upon him. Lord Althorp proposed the amendment of adding 'conformably to the resolutions of 1823.' Then came the trial. They (privately)

besought my father to give way, and not to press them to a division. 'They hated,' they said, 'dividing against him, when their hearts were all for him; it was merely a nominal difference, why should he split hairs? he was sure to be beaten, where was the use of bringing them all into difficulty, and making them vote against him?' He told us that he thought he had a hundred applications of this kind in the course of the evening; in short, nearly every friend he had in the House came to him, and by all considerations of reason and friendship besought him to give way. Mr Evans was almost the only person who took the other side. I watched my father with indescribable anxiety seeing the members, one after the other, come and sit down by him, and judging but too well from their gestures, what their errand was. One of them went to him four times, and at last sent up a note to him with these words, 'immovable as ever?' To my uncle Hoare, who was under the gallery, they went repeatedly, but with no success, for he would only send him a message to persevere. My uncle described to me one gentleman, not a member, who was near him, under the gallery, as having been in a high agitation all the evening, exclaiming, 'Oh, he won't stand! Oh, he'll yield! I'd give a hundred pounds, I'd give a thousand pounds, to have him divide! Noble! noble! What a noble fellow he is!' according to the various changes in the aspect of things. Among others, Mr Hume came across to try his eloquence; 'Now, don't be so obstinate; just put in this one word, "interest;" it makes no real difference, and then all will be easy. You will only alienate the Government. Now,' said he, 'I'll just tell Lord Althorp you have consented.' My father replied, 'I don't think I exaggerate when I say, I would rather your head were off, and mine too; I am sure I had rather yours were!' What a trial it was. He said afterwards, that he could compare it to nothing but a continual tooth-drawing the whole evening. At length he rose to reply, and very touchingly alluded to the effort he had to make, but said, he was bound in conscience to do it, and that he *would* divide the House. Accordingly the question was put. The Speaker said, 'I think the noes have it.' Never shall I forget the tone in which his solitary voice replied, 'No, sir.' 'The noes must go forth,' said the Speaker, and all the House appeared to troop out. Those within were counted, and amounted to ninety. This was a minority far beyond our expectations, and from fifty upwards, my heart beat higher at every number. I went round to the other side of the ventilator to see them coming in. How my heart fell, as they reached 88, 89, 90, 91, and the string still not at end; and it went on to 136. So Lord Althorp's amendment was carried. At two o'clock in the morning it was over, and for the first time my father came up to us in the ventilator. I soon saw that it was almost too sore a subject to touch upon; he was so wounded at having vexed all his friends. Mr —— would not speak to him after it was over, so angry was he; and for days after when my father came home, he used to mention, with real pain, somebody or other who would not return his bow. On Friday, Dr Lushington came here and cheered him, saying,

'Well, that minority was a great victory;' and this does seem to be the case; but we hardly know how to forgive some of those who ought to have swelled its numbers. My father, however, cannot bear to hear them blamed. —— was wishing that some of those who professed so much, and voted against him, might be turned out. 'Oh!' he said, 'I would not hurt a hair of their heads.' He feels it a great cause for thankfulness and encouragement to have a committee sitting to consider the best means of getting rid of slavery. The formation of this committee was the next business, and very difficult indeed it was. My father went many times to Lord Althorp about it. Once Lord Althorp said, 'The fact is, Buxton, the West Indians object, not only to your friends, but to everbody who has any constituents: they won't have anybody out of schedule A.' Lord Howick's name being mentioned, Lord Althorp said, 'Why, he's one of yourselves,' but added, 'we, the Government, the middle party, must be represented in the committee.' My father said, 'Now, laying aside the caution of power, and all the pledges you have given, do you mean to say you don't agree with me in your heart?' He did not deny it."

In this debate, as Mr Buxton afterwards said, "the cause made a seven-league stride." One sentence of his speech may be given:—

"How is the Government prepared to act in case of a general insurrection of the negroes? War is to be lamented anywhere, and under any circumstances: but a war against a people struggling for their freedom and their right would be the falsest position in which it is possible for England to be placed. And does the noble lord think that the people out of doors will be content to see their resources exhausted for the purpose of crushing the inalienable rights of mankind?

"I will refer the House to the sentiments of Mr Jefferson, the President of the United States. Mr Jefferson was himself a slave-owner, and full of the prejudices of slave-owners; yet he left this memorable testimony: 'I do, indeed, tremble for my country, when I remember that God is just, and that His justice may not sleep for ever. A revolution is among possible events; the Almighty has no attribute which would side with us in such a struggle.'

"This is the point that weighs most heavily with me: 'The Almighty has no attribute that will side with us in such a struggle.' A war with an overwhelming physical force,—a war with a climate fatal to the European constitution,—a war, in which the heart of the people of England would lean toward the enemy; it is hazarding all these terrible evils; but all are light and trivial, compared with the conviction I feel, that in such a warfare it is not possible to ask, nor can we expect, the countenance of Heaven. I assure the House I have been discharging a most painful duty, and my endeavour has been to perform it without offence to any one."

Mr Buxton writes a few days afterwards to his daughter:—

"LONDON, *May* 31, 1832.

"One line, if it be only to say that we are well and happy. I earnestly hope that you are the same. Pray enjoy yourself all you can: you are entitled to a holiday.

"I had a successful though laborious day yesterday. City Committees till ten o'clock; Secondary Punishments, from one till four; a ride; Criminal Law from five till eleven; the motion carried.

"To-morrow, the West-Indies Committee meets for the first time. Love to all your party, and above all to yourself, my daughter, sister, friend, companion, counsellor."

Pursuant to the amended resolution, a committee was named, of which Sir James Graham was chairman. Much of the evidence brought before it related to the insurrection of the negroes in Jamaica, which had been followed by proceedings on the part of the colonists, equally deserving the name of insurrection, had they not been perpetrated by the militia, the magistrates, and the gentry of the island. These persons had come to a resolution to maintain slavery, by putting down the religious instruction of the negroes. They accordingly destroyed seventeen chapels,* and inflicted upon the pastors and their flocks every species of cruelty and insult. "I stake my character," said Mr Buxton, "on the accuracy of the fact, that negroes have been scourged to the very borders of the grave, uncharged with any crime, save that of worshipping their God."

He adds, in reference to the unfortunate missionaries,—

"There have not been, in our day, such persecutions as these brave and good men have been constrained to endure. Hereafter we must make selections among our missionaries. Is there a man whose timid or tender spirit is unequal to the storm of persecution? Send him to the savage—expose him to the cannibal—save his life by directing his steps to the rude haunts of the barbarian. But if there is a man of a stiffer, sterner nature, a man willing to encounter obloquy, torture, and death, let him be reserved for the tender mercies of our Christian brethren and fellow-countrymen, the planters of Jamaica."†

The more obnoxious missionaries, particularly Messrs Knibb and Burchell, were driven from the island, and arrived in England at the very juncture when their evidence before the committees was of the utmost value, and went forth to the country under parliamentary sanction. They then travelled through England and Scotland, holding meetings in all the principal towns, and their eloquent ap-

* See report of the Committee, p. 270.

† *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, vol. v p. 149.

peals produced a great effect upon the public mind. Nothing, in fact, contributed more powerfully to arouse the "religious world" to a sense of their duty with regard to the question of slavery. Mr Buxton frequently adverted to the overruling hand of Providence, which had thus turned the intolerance of the system to its own destruction.

The investigations of the committees of both Houses were published together, and the general impression was that they had established two points: First, that slavery was an evil for which there was no remedy but extirpation; secondly, that its extirpation would be *safe*.

The nation willingly acceded to these conclusions, and impatiently desired to act upon them. How they affected the minds of those in office we shall presently learn.

Such was the state of the slavery question when the session closed; and Mr Buxton returned with his family to Northrepps. During a short visit to London, in September, he thus writes to his daughter:—

"SPITALFIELDS, *September* 27, 1832.

"I saw T. B. Macaulay yesterday: he told me one thing, which has much occupied my mind ever since, and which furnished the subject-matter of my meditations as I rode by the light of the stars to Upton last night. He said, 'You know how entirely everybody disapproved of your course in your motion, and thought you very wrong, very hard-hearted, and very headstrong; but two or three days after the debate, Lord Althorp said to me, "*That division of Buxton's has settled the slavery question.* If he can get ninety to vote with him when he is wrong, and when most of those really interested in the subject vote against him, he can command a *majority when he is right. The question is settled:* the Government see it, and they will take it up."' So reported Macaulay; and he added, 'Sir James Graham told me yesterday that the Government meet in a week; they will then divide themselves into committees on the three or four leading questions, for the purpose of settling them. Slavery is one.' Now it is not so much the fact that Government are going to take into their own hands the question for the purpose of settling it which occupied my mind, as the consideration of the mode by which we were led to that division, to which such important consequences attach. It certainly was not the wisdom of my coadjutors; for, with the exception of my own family, Hoare, Evans, Johnston, and one or two others, they were all directly at variance with me. Brougham, when he heard of my obstinacy, said, 'Is the man mad? does he intend to act without means? He *must* give way.' It really was not the wisdom of my counsellors, and as certainly it was not either my own wisdom or resolution. I felt, it is true, clear that I was right; but I did not find it easy to explain the reason why I was so clear.

"Then as to the resolution, I found it very difficult to stand firm. I felt far more distressed than I ought to have done, at acting in hostility to my friends. I was unusually weak on that point. What, then, led to the division? If ever there was a subject which occupied our prayers, it was this. Do you remember how we desired that God would give me His Spirit in that emergency, that He would rise up as the champion of the oppressed? How we quoted the promise, 'He that lacketh wisdom, let him ask it of the Lord, and it shall be given him?' And how I kept open that passage in the Old Testament, in which it is said, (2 Chron. chap. xx. 12,) 'We have no might against this great company that cometh against us: neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee;' the Spirit of the Lord replying, 'Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's.' If you want to see the passage, open my Bible; it will turn of itself to the place. I sincerely believe that prayer was the cause of that division; and I am confirmed in this, by knowing that we by no means calculated on the effect which that division seems likely to produce. The course we took appeared to be right, and we followed it blindly."

It was not only from his antagonists that Mr Buxton encountered opposition; the storm at times was almost as fierce from those who were as ardent as himself in the cause of emancipation. On the eve of the election of 1832, he suggested, in a letter to Sir George Chetwynd, that the pledge to be asked from candidates at elections should be, that they would aim at "the extinction of slavery, at the earliest period *compatible with the safety of all classes.*" This last condition was unacceptable to one section of the anti-slavery party, whose zeal could no longer brook any degree of moderation. The following burst of "indignant astonishment" was from the pen of one of these impetuous advocates:—

"I have long condemned the advocates of emancipation, because they have not sought the deliverance of the slave till it suited the *convenience* of his oppressor to let him go free. . . . . To be candid, sir, I would rather see you throw up your brief, and take a retaining fee from the planters, than that you should, in a reformed Parliament, bring forward a motion in accordance with the sentiments expressed in your letter to Sir G. Chetwynd. And if you appear as the advocate of such a profane measure, we will look to some more enlightened advocate to forward that cause which must be carried."

Mr Buxton's reply was as follows:—

"NORTHREPPS, *October* 15, 1832.

"DEAR SIR,—I am so thoroughly inured to expressions of the strongest condemnation from all sides, as to my course with regard to slavery, that I should scarcely be prevailed on to notice those I have received from you, were it not that I *like* the spirit which dic-

tates them, and should be glad if it were more general. Without therefore noticing the violence of your expressions, or questioning their propriety towards one who, however unworthy and unsuccessful, has certainly been for many years almost wholly devoted to this cause, let me attempt to justify the letter to which you refer. I said to Sir George Chetwynd, as I have said on every other occasion, and as the words of my motion expressed, that my aim was 'emancipation, at the earliest period compatible with the personal safety of all classes.' Where did you find a word of '*convenience*?' How little do you know the heavy battles I have had to fight on this very point. If the emancipation of the slaves were in my power, I could not dare to accomplish it without previous police regulations, which is all the delay I mean. These ought to be undertaken instantly; for I know our power of emancipating in one way or another is fast drawing to a close: I mean that the negroes will take the work into their own hands. But whoever else is willing to undertake the weight of so enormous a responsibility, *I am not*, without considering the personal safety of all classes. If you, my dear sir, can send some 'more enlightened advocate,' you may believe me, that we are far too much oppressed and borne down with the weight of our task in Parliament, not to hail his assistance, however given. But, in the meantime, I must take the liberty of saying that I did not undertake this serious work at man's bidding; nor shall I, I trust, lay it down at the bidding either of enemies or friends.

"With every good wish, and begging you to continue your exertions, and to blame me as much as you please, if it will stir up one of our friends, I am, dear Sir, yours, very truly,

"T. FOWELL BUXTON."

CHAPTER XVIII.

1833.

MR BUXTON went down to the House of Lords, on the 5th of February 1833, in full expectation of hearing from the King's speech that one of the great measures of the session was to be the emancipation of the slaves. Great was his disappointment when the speech closed without any allusion whatever to the subject. He hastened back to the House of Commons, and immediately on the Speaker's return gave notice of a motion, on the 19th of March, for the abolition of slavery. A few minutes afterwards, one of his friends hurried up to him, and said, "I have just been with Brougham and Goderich, and they conjure you to do nothing hastily; you will wreck the cause if you do." "What! not give notice of a motion?" said he. "Oh, no! by no means," was the reply; "you will knock the whole

thing over." "*But it's done!*" said Mr Buxton. This prompt proceeding had an immediate effect on the ministers. He writes two days later to Mr Joseph John Gurney :—

"LONDON, *February* 7, 1833.

"You may suppose that I was affronted and vexed at the silence of the King's speech. I instantly gave notice of a motion, and last night, as you will see by the papers, I asked the Government what their intentions were. They replied, that they would undertake the question, and introduce '*a safe and satisfactory measure.*' I feel excessively relieved and delighted, and not a little thankful for this great mercy."

A government must have been short-sighted indeed, which could have hoped to keep clear of this great question. Public feeling had been of late gathering with prodigious rapidity, and a crisis was evidently near. The outcry against slavery seemed to be rising at once from every corner of the land. Men of all ranks, of all denominations, were joining in the attack: and the House itself, where but a few years before scarcely half-a-dozen hearty advocates for emancipation could have been numbered, was now filled with zealous friends of the cause.

But, while Mr Buxton was quite willing to give up the conduct of the case to the ministers, he did not cease to watch their proceedings with the utmost vigilance. Hopes and fears alternated as to the nature and extent of the measures that were to be expected from them, and as the time advanced, he became more and more uneasy.

He had consented to abstain from making his motion on the 19th of March, on the condition that the ministers would themselves bring in "a safe and satisfactory measure;" but some weeks had now elapsed, and still not one word had been said publicly as to their intention of fulfilling their pledge. They had named no day for a motion; they had officially announced no plan; and rumours got abroad that there were divisions in the camp, that the Government collectively had by no means decided on adopting the vigorous steps which some of its members proposed.

From ten years' experience, Mr Buxton had but too well learnt the immense weight of the West Indian party in the councils of the nation. He knew also that the Government had the questions of finance, India, and the Church to grapple with during this session, and were probably not so

impressed as himself with the extreme danger of delaying the emancipation of the slaves. He could not, therefore, but feel it a cause for alarm that, notwithstanding Lord Althorp's promise of a safe and satisfactory measure, so long a period should have elapsed without the appearance of any measure at all. "He is much depressed, because the ministers do not name a day; he does not know whether or not to execute his threat of bringing his motion forward next Tuesday; for this he is almost unprepared: and besides, they promise so well that it seems doubtful whether it would be right or politic to go to war with them. He sleeps badly and is very anxious." *

Since the ministers were thus overwhelmed with business, and fettered by their relations with the West Indian proprietors, it may naturally be asked, why did he leave the question in their hands? Backed by such a band of followers, why did he not wield all his powers, and drive forward the measure with his own hand? It was because he believed that while emancipation in the end was certain, it was only as a cabinet measure that it could be carried through during this session; and delay, fraught as it might be with servile revolt, was the one thing that he most dreaded. He contented himself, therefore, with spurring on the Government, resolving not to take the lead unless compelled to do so. Nothing drew such notice from his friends as the indifference he evinced as to any personal credit to himself. "It is surprising," writes one of them, "how he puts himself entirely out of the question. It does not seem to excite one feeling in his mind, whether, after all his toils, he is to appear in the matter or not. He seems to care for *nothing*, but the advancement of the cause."

His whole heart and soul, in fact, were given up to the work, and the depth and intensity of his feelings were visible in all his deportment; he looked pale and careworn, and his tall figure began to shew signs of stooping. He spoke little, and was continually engrossed in thought. His demeanour could not be more exactly portrayed, than by Spenser's lines:—

> "But little joye had he to talke of ought,
> Or ought to heare that mote delightful be;
> His mind was sole possessed of one thought
> That gave none other place."

* Letter to Northrepps Cottage, March 16.

Incessant efforts had now to be made by Mr Buxton, before the Government would really address themselves to the question. They were resolved, if possible, to defer it *sine die*. In fact, Lord Althorp told him "they really were obliged to do so, they were in such a strait." But Mr Buxton was resolute, and pushed them so hard, that at last they fairly pledged themselves to bring the matter forward.

When the day for the motion had been announced by Government, Mr Buxton sank for a while into a feeling of profound repose. He was able to sleep at night, and began to resume his cheerfulness of manner. He thought that as the Government had been prevented from delaying the question, the grand point was gained; and that it only remained for him and his friends to await the unfolding of their measure. "I have no more to do with slavery now than any other gentleman," was an expression frequently on his lips, during that interval of rest. But he soon found that he had been too sanguine; at the end of a few days fresh causes of anxiety began to arise. To his dismay, he heard a rumour that Lord Howick, on the soundness of whose principles he thoroughly relied, was about to resign his place, on the ground that the Cabinet refused to concur in his scheme of immediate emancipation. Afterwards he learned that the Government were inclined to make the negroes buy out their own freedom. The details of the measure Mr Buxton could not learn, but the process was sure to be dilatory, and was on the face of it unjust. Full of chagrin and disappointment, he hurried to Dr Lushington. They agreed to call a special committee of the Anti-slavery Society on the following day, and he then went home, "looking as if some heavy misfortune had befallen him." The next day, the heads of the party met to deliberate on this new turn of affairs. Their opinion as to the course they should pursue was unanimous. The higher powers were clearly about to fail them; the nation was firmly on their side: why not, then, place the matter in the nation's hands?

Having resolved to arouse the people, they spared no pains to do so with effect; and, in this endeavour, a most opportune aid was afforded them. Just at the time when they were anxious to call forth a burst of public feeling,

Mr Buxton being one morning at breakfast, surrounded as usual by papers, and deep in discussion with Mr George Stephen, a young man named Whitely was brought in and introduced to him by Mr Pringle, as a book-keeper who had just returned from the West Indies. He told what he had seen, a tale of cruelty and suffering such as Mr Buxton had heard a hundred times before. The young man took his leave; but scarcely was he gone, when the thought struck Mr Buxton, that such a picture fresh from the spot was the very thing they needed. He ran into the street without his hat, caught Whitely as he turned the corner into Portland Place, and having brought him back, told him that he absolutely must put down this story in writing, and must also produce certificates as to his own character. These certificates proved to be highly satisfactory, and in a few days the pamphlet was in print.*

The effect was prodigious. The narrative, written in a homely but graphic style, realised to the mind of every one the real import of what he had previously heard, as to the dwindling of the population and the terrors of the lash. Truth, too, was stamped on every word. It contained indeed nothing new, but in reading Whitely's simple narrative of the common incidents of a sugar plantation, the whole scene appeared to stand before the eye. The driver looking on with lazy indifference—the piercing cries and supplications of the miserable negro woman brought out and tied down upon the ground to receive her punishment—the crack of the fearful cart-whip, and the shriek of agony as it cut deep into the flesh—appalling as the description was, yet no man could deny its truth. In four colonies, and these the best ordered, the planters had themselves sworn to the infliction of sixty-eight thousand punishments in two years. And let any man say how they could be inflicted, without these circumstances of horrible suffering and degradation.

The pamphlet spread abroad with wonderful rapidity. "Whitely," says a letter to Northrepps, "nothing but Whitely, is the order of the day; the sensation it creates is immense; the printers can scarcely supply the demand.

* "Three Months in Jamaica;" by Henry Whitely The certificates are given at the end of the pamphlet.

Mr Pringle says ten thousand have been ordered to-day." In short, within a fortnight's time, nearly two hundred thousand copies were scattered abroad.

Eager as the leaders were to urge the Government forward, by turning upon them a strong pressure of popular opinion, they were at the same time most anxious to preserve their alliance, and keep them in the front of the movement, by every allowable concession. And the first concession which the Government required, was the concurrence of the Abolitionists in granting compensation to the planters.

On this question the opinions held by the anti-slavery leaders were not those of the main body of their followers. The former maintained that neither law nor custom could give one man a real claim to the possession of another; and, therefore, they could not admit that the planters had any *moral right* to compensation. On the other hand, they were both willing and desirous to give compensation, first, because they thought that a bonus to the planters was the best if not the only way of obtaining emancipation with safety to all parties; secondly, because they heartily desired that, while the negroes were set at liberty, the planters should not be exposed to a ruinous loss. But the greater number of their followers did not comprehend the real position of affairs. They were not aware of the relative strength of the three parties in Parliament, nor did they perceive that, unless a junction were effected with the Government, success could not be insured against the West Indians.

Carried away by their anxiety to do justice to the negro, they deemed all compromise, and all concession to his owner, a dereliction of principle; nor could they endure the idea of striking a bargain with the oppressor. It is likely, also, that, in the minds of many, a feeling of personal hostility towards the planters had grown up during the long continuance of the contest. Mr Buxton, therefore, and his more temperate coadjutors, had now to undertake that task which has so frequently dethroned the leaders of a popular movement—that of teaching their followers to rein in their zeal.

It was determined that the idea of acquiescing in some

system of compensation should be broached to the Anti-slavery Society at its approaching annual meeting. This meeting was held on the 2d of April; Lord Suffield was in the chair, while Mr Buxton undertook the delicate task of introducing the proposal.

His friends listened with extreme anxiety as he commenced his speech; for a time he seemed to hover about the subject, as if shrinking from his task; but at length he grappled boldly with it, and his appeal was met with apparently unanimous applause. He was ably followed by Dr Lushington, Mr Joseph J. Gurney, and others; and their exertions appeared to be crowned with unexpected success.

But nothing can be more transient than such triumphs of oratory, which can only withdraw a party for an instant from its natural career. Smooth as the beginning seemed, at this point commenced divisions in the ranks of the Abolitionists, and the seeds of discord were sown, which bore fruit in due season, though happily too late to be of injury to the cause.

Nor was solicitude confined to Mr Buxton and his friends. The Government had their full share of anxiety. Indeed Mr Stanley's position, in the midst of so many conflicting interests, was one of great difficulty, and he found it necessary to postpone his motion till the 14th of May.

Now, therefore, when full success might be gained by a vigorous effort, or lost if that effort were not made, now was the time to bring every force to bear, and to sweep away all obstacles by an irresistible impetus of public feeling. This was the moment to make the Government feel to what a pitch the hatred of slavery had risen. Nor was it difficult. The meeting in Exeter Hall and the publication of Whitely's pamphlet had led the way. These first steps were followed up by the most vigorous proceedings, under the direction chiefly of Mr George Stephen and Mr Pringle, whose services were of essential value at this critical juncture. Lectures were delivered in all the counties of the kingdom. Crowded meetings were everywhere held, and the friends of the cause bestirred themselves from one end of the country to the other. The newspapers and periodicals caught the enthusiasm. The cause of mercy seemed the cause of religion, and many of the clergy and dissenting ministers did not

hesitate to urge upon their flocks the sinfulness of slavery, and the righteousness of joining heart and hand for its overthrow. The flame soon spread far and wide; from every corner of the land petitions poured in, breathing the earnest desires of the people; from Devonshire came five hundred, from West Essex three hundred; the number of signatures attached to the petitions presented this session were calculated to amount to nearly a million and a half; and just at this moment, when the ferment was highest, a step was taken which gave double effect to all the previous proceedings. A circular was addressed by the committee to the friends of the cause in every considerable town, requesting them to appoint delegates, who were to meet in London on the 18th of the month, to represent in person the wishes of the nation.

Mr Buxton had been, with Mr James Stephen, spending a few of these eventful days in a delightful, and as it proved, a farewell visit to Mr Wilberforce, at his son's house at East Farleigh; but when the day for the assembling of the delegates drew near, he returned to town, and again plunged into the whirlpool of affairs. During the heat of the conflict, the rush of business at his house was incessant. As he usually returned late from the House, and slept very badly, he was rarely down in the morning till ten or eleven o'clock, and long before he had finished dressing the applicants for admission began to pour in. To him, as the anti-slavery leader, every one who had any connexion with the utmost border of the subject felt at liberty to apply. Besides his London coadjutors in the cause, he was often visited by those who had been active in promoting it in the country, and who wished for his advice or encouragement. Then there were people from the West Indies, teeming with complaints, arguments, and information—some come in the hope of convincing him by their individual experience, that he was all in the wrong; some to confirm his impression that he was all in the right; angry planters come to expostulate; missionaries, teachers, and negroes come to lay their cases before him, or to supply him with intelligence. His house, which had before been a kind of depot of anti-slavery petitions, was now half filled with them; in every corner they lay in heaps, with letters and papers from all parts

of England. Anxious consultations were going on among the leaders of the party in London. The call for delegates had been answered to an unexpected extent; and the question now arose how most prudently and effectively to wield the force about to join them. Nor was the moment unattended with anxiety. It was very doubtful whether so many earnest advocates could be brought to act in concert; each had his own conscientious scruples, and what can be more wayward than the conscience of a scrupulous Englishman? "People's principles are the greatest nuisances in life," playfully exclaimed Mr Buxton, when he returned from the first meeting of 330 delegates in Exeter Hall. It was an occasion which called forth all his tact and powers of argument; but the delegates, strong and independent as their views were, placed a generous confidence in their leaders, and a sufficient degree of unanimity was at length obtained.

It was necessary to frame an address to the Premier which should embody their sentiments. This difficult task fell to the lot of Mr J. J. Gurney, and the paper which he prepared received a cordial assent. On the ensuing day they met again in Exeter Hall, and proceeded in a body to Downing Street. Drawn as they had been from almost every place of note in the United Kingdom, they included in their ranks men of every calling and denomination; among them were to be seen, we are told, "merchants, squires, bankers, magistrates, clergymen, and dissenting ministers." Lord Althorp and Mr Stanley received them; and after Mr Samuel Gurney had read the address and commented on it, Mr Buxton stepped forward and pointed out the extent of the movement which had sent the delegates thither.

It cannot be doubted that this manifestation had a great effect on the Government; it was the first occasion on which public feeling so emphatically expressed itself, and it was felt to be called forth by no ordinary earnestness of purpose. Mr Stanley afterwards acknowledged its importance, but, at the time, he gave no further pledge than that he would not again postpone his motion.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE Government plan was now expected with the utmost anxiety. In the interval Mr Buxton, who stood much in need of rest and quiet, retreated with his daughters to a fishing cottage at Dagenham Breach, near the Thames, belonging to Mr Fry. This could be reached only by water, and afforded the most perfect seclusion. "We trust," writes one of the party, "not to see the face of a visitor, nor the direction of a letter, till Monday the 13th." Dr Lushington remained in town, to watch the progress of affairs. Many contradictory reports were afloat, and Mr Buxton's brief holiday was spent in deep meditation on the course he should pursue. His eldest daughter thus writes from Dagenham :—

"*Saturday, May* 11, 1833.

"Here we are in our singular retirement, living out of doors on the rich bank, which is overflowing with grass and flowers, and watching the hundreds of fine ships, which from here seem to float among the fields; but when we climb the bank, there lies the river stretched out—its lovely reaches glittering in the sun. We have tasted some real enjoyment in the exuberance of spring in this place, but far more in seeing my dear father wandering about without his hat for hours together. He has, I fear, been reflecting too deeply during these walks. A set of harassing letters came from London yesterday, which immediately gave him a sharp headache."

At last the 14th of May arrived. Mr Buxton afterwards told his daughter, that just as they were going off to the House on that memorable evening—perhaps the most memorable of his life—he had reached his study door, when he went back to have one look at his Bible. He opened it on the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, and read those two verses, "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as noon-day: and the Lord shall guide thee continually," &c. "The remembrance of them preserved me," he said, "from being in the least anxious the whole evening; I felt so sure the promise would be fulfilled to me, 'The Lord shall guide thee continually.'"

The proceedings of the evening commenced with the presentation of a huge petition from the females of Great Britain. The scene is thus described in the *Mirror of Parliament* :—

"Mr Fowell Buxton, on presenting the petition from the females of Great Britain, said, 'Ten days ago, this petition was not prepared; it was not even in contemplation; but within that short period, without any solicitation whatever, it has received from all parts of the country through which it has been circulated, no less than 187,000 signatures. I wish to consult you, sir, as to the manner in which I am to get it to the table, for it is so heavy that I really am unable to carry it.'

"The Speaker.—'If the hon. gentleman cannot bring up the petition himself, he must procure the assistance of some other members of the House.'

"Three hon. members then went out with Mr Buxton, and by the united exertions of the four, the petition was brought in and placed upon the table" (as we are told elsewhere), "amidst the laughter and cheers of the House."

Mr Stanley then opened the debate. He had been Colonial Secretary little more than a month, yet he shewed that, vast as the subject was, he had, in that short time, completely mastered its details, had become conversant with all its dangers and difficulties, and was prepared to settle it for ever. He began by noticing the depth and extent of public feeling upon the question of slavery, and that this feeling had its source in religious principle.

"There is," he said, "throughout the country, from one end of it to the other, a determination, a determination the more absolute and irresistible, because it is founded in that deep religious feeling, on that solemn conviction of principle, which admits of no palliative or compromise, and which has declared itself in a voice to which no minister can be deaf, and which no man who watches the signs of the times can misunderstand."

He then entered into the history of the case, pointing out how confidently Parliament had looked for the co-operation of the colonial legislatures, and that in these expectations "the country had been grievously disappointed."

"The voice," he said, "of friendly warning—the voice of authority, has been found to be in vain. *Not a single step has been taken by any one of the colonial legislatures with a view to the extinction of negro slavery.*"

After asserting the right of the mother country to legislate for the colonies, he proceeded to shew that the distresses of the colonists were not owing "to the unceasing efforts of the abolitionists," and the discussion of the slavery question in Parliament; and he read documents to prove that those distresses existed to the same extent, not

only before slavery was discussed, but even in the days of the slave trade.

He then entered forcibly into the arguments founded on the rapid decrease of population, and the immense amount of punishments with the whip, proving the pregnant and dreadful fact, that as the population diminished the number of stripes increased.

Up to this point Mr Buxton and Dr Lushington had been listening to the speech with satisfaction and delight. The very principles, the very facts, the very arguments which they had for years been endeavouring to impress upon the House, they had now heard enforced from the Treasury bench, with the splendid eloquence of Mr Stanley.

But when Mr Stanley turned from the general principles on which he proposed to act, to his scheme for their application, the feelings of the advocates of the negro underwent a painful change. His plan contained the following main propositions,—some good, some, as they conceived, fraught with evil:—

That slavery be abolished throughout the British dominions.

But that the present slaves should be apprenticed for a certain period of time to their former owners; that is, should be bound to labour for their former masters during three-fourths of the day, the masters in return supplying them with food and clothing.

Part of the slave's value would be secured in this way to his former owner. The remainder was to be paid by England in the shape of a loan of £15,000,000 sterling (afterwards changed to a gift of twenty millions.)

All children under six years old were to be at once set completely free. Stipendiary magistrates were to be appointed to carry out these measures, and provision was to be made for the religious and moral training of the negro population.

The negro was to be liable to corporal punishment, if he refused to give his due portion of labour.

When Mr Stanley had announced the resolutions of which these were the leading features, their further discussion was adjourned to the 30th of May.

Upon the whole, Mr Buxton was satisfied with the result of the evening, for although some of the proposed arrangements were utterly distasteful to him, he looked forward to great modifications of the obnoxious clauses during the progress of the bill through Parliament. According to his invariable practice, he laid the matter before God in frequent and earnest prayer.

The following was the substance of his supplications at family prayers, on the second morning after the announcement of the Government measure :—

"We beseech Thee, O Lord, to be Thyself the champion of the captives; their champion, yet not the avenger of their sufferings. We pray Thee so to assist this great work, that it may be the means of spreading temporal peace, ease, and industry among the negroes, and of leading them spiritually to the knowledge of God, that by it millions may be brought into Thy happy fold. And for those who have laboured in this good and great work, may their reward be in the outpouring of Thy Spirit; may they live in Thy light, and may their darkness be removed for ever; may the Lord guide them continually; may their soul be like a watered garden, and may they be satisfied in drought. Bless the country that shall make this amazing sacrifice.

"And now I desire to return thanks unto Thee, O Lord, for the great mercies Thou hast shewn us; that thou hast turned the hearts of those who have influence and power, and made them to be labourers in the cause of the oppressed. We thank Thee, that Thou at length hast shewn Thine own power and come forth."

The discussion of the resolutions occupied the House till the 12th of June. At this point the grand object of the anti-slavery leaders was to see the Government and Parliament fully committed to the measure. "For," said Mr Buxton, "were an amendment on this plan to be moved and carried, and we were in consequence to lose this measure altogether, an insurrection would inevitably take place, and I confess I cannot with firmness contemplate so horrible a termination of slavery." Therefore, while protesting against the apprenticeship, they abstained from dividing the House upon it till the principle of the bill had been admitted. They also acquiesced in the grant of compensation to the planters. On the clause relating to the moral and religious instruction of the negroes—

"I shall move," said Mr Buxton, "as an amendment, the words which have been used by the right hon. Secretary in his speech, namely, that the system of instruction shall be conducted, not on

exclusive, not on intolerant, but on 'liberal and comprehensive principles.' I am the more anxious on this point, as I know on the one hand, the extreme animosity of the colonists to all religious teachers of their slaves, except those of the Church of England, while on the other, I know the vast benefits which the dissenting missionaries have imparted, and are likely to impart to the negro population. I think a system of perfect and unbounded toleration ought to prevail in the West Indies, as in England."

But the main features of the plan were, "apprenticeship for the negro," and "compensation to the planters;" and these were so extremely obnoxious to the more vehement abolitionists, that Mr Buxton was most severely blamed for having acquiesced in the principle of a measure of which these formed an essential part. He should, they said, have at once gone to war with the Government. But his own deliberate opinion was, that if this measure were refused, no other would be obtained; and, therefore, he was most anxious to modify rather than to reject it. Dr Lushington took the same view, and by degrees they had the satisfaction of finding that all their original coadjutors acquiesced in its prudence.

But the anti-slavery movement was outstripping its leaders. In so large and zealous a body as that which now followed them, there could not but be many so earnestly bent on the success of their cause, as to be unable to heed the obstacles which still blocked the way, and who,

> "Forgetting
> That policy, expecting not clear gain,
> Deals ever in alternatives," *

looked with extreme jealousy on the slightest concessions made by their chiefs. And thus the party quickly fell into two sections, one of which was ready to make any reasonable sacrifice in order to attain success, while the other firmly opposed all compromise, looking on it as a breach of principle. This latter section, dissatisfied with the moderate counsels of the original committee, had already established another of its own, under the name of the "Agency Committee," which severely condemned Mr Buxton for being willing to acknowledge the claims of the West Indian party.

In the midst of these attacks it was most cheering to Mr

* "Philip Van Artevelde."

Buxton to receive assurances of sympathy and approbation from those veterans of the cause, whose opinions he most highly valued.

Mr Wilberforce thus expresses himself to Mr W. Smith :—

"BATH, *June* 25, 1833.

"I have but one moment to-day at my command, but I cannot bear to remain silent when your letter touches a string which vibrates in my inmost soul. I feel more indignant than I can well express, at the unworthy treatment dear honest Buxton has experienced. Even had he been mistaken in his judgment, yet, knowing the purity of his motives, and the zeal, and the anxiety, and the labour which he has been experiencing, any liberal man would have taken him to his bosom, and endeavoured to cheer and to comfort him. I entirely concur with you as to our true policy."

One of the letters to Northrepps Cottage, says :—

"The career of victory has been mixed with many personal humiliations and mortifications; and now the anti-slavery people are so violently turned against my father for not voting against the twenty millions, that they can hardly find words to express their displeasure. I must say, that his spirit through all is wonderful. He is as uninfluenced by the attacks of friends as of foes, and goes straight on to his mark with a degree of firmness, which, considering it is unaided by that very supporting quality, natural obstinacy, seems almost incomprehensible.

"Every day he receives violent letters of censure, from one party for voting for the money, from another for saying the planters have no right to it; but he is under such a deep and powerful impulse for the good of his cause, that nothing else touches him. He seems to be devoted to it in a way that renders him insensible to minor influences, and reminds one of the description of Howard, in Foster's essay on Decision of Character. Self is strangely forgotten by him; not subdued or resisted, but genuinely forgotten."

When Mr Stanley's bill was brought in, Mr Buxton was disappointed to find that it retained the obnoxious points in full force. He writes :—

"LONDON, *July* 6, 1833.

"I do not think our slavery matters are going on very well. The Government are going to bring in their bill to-night. It retains the apprenticeship for twelve years, which makes me very indignant, and would make me very unhappy, if I did not indulge the hope, that we shall be able to beat them out of it in committee."

According to that plan of operations which had excited so much angry feeling, Mr Stanley's bill was allowed to pass through the second reading undisputed, but no sooner had it come under committee than the battle began.

The first and most important struggle was on the dura-

tion of the apprenticeship.* Mr Buxton moved an amendment for limiting it to the shortest period necessary for establishing the system of free labour, and suggested the term of one year; "for," he said, "if we are to have neither wages nor the whip, neither hope nor fear, neither inducement nor compulsion, how any one can suppose that we shall be able to obtain the labour of the negroes, is to me unintelligible."

After a spirited debate the amendment was lost, though only by a minority of seven; but, as Lord Howick observed, the first fruits of the discussion were gathered the next day, when Mr Stanley consented, in deference to the wishes of the House, to reduce the period of apprenticeship from twelve to seven years.

In the course of the debate on the 24th inst., Mr Stanley "warned his honourable friend (the member for Weymouth), that any expression falling from him would come upon the minds of the negroes with much greater weight than any similar expression coming from any other person."

In his reply, Mr Buxton said:—

"The right hon. gentleman has done me the honour to say that the language which I hold towards the negroes may have some influence upon them. If I thought that were the case—if indeed the faintest echo of my voice could ever reach them—most earnestly, most emphatically, would I implore them, by every motive of duty, gratitude, and self-interest, to do their part towards the peaceful termination of their bondage. I would say to them, 'The time of your deliverance is at hand, let that period be sacred, let it be defiled by no outrage, let it be stained by no blood, let not the hair of a single planter be touched. Make any sacrifice, bear any indignity, submit to any privation, rather than raise your hand against any white man. Continue to wait and to work patiently; trust implicitly to that great nation and paternal Government, who are labouring for your release. Preserve peace and order to the utmost of your power—obey the laws, both before and at the time of your liberation—and when that period shall arrive, fulfil the expectations of your friends in England, and the promises they have made in your name, by the most orderly, diligent, and dutiful conduct!'"

In the division which followed, Mr Buxton voted for the grant of £20,000,000 to the planters,† "as giving the best

* July 24. See *Mirror of Parliament* for the course of the Slavery Bill.

† The following afternoon his sister, Mrs Forster, asked him "if he had not acted hastily in giving his vote for compensation?" "No," replied he, slowly rising off the sofa, and speaking with great deliberation. "No: I would do the same again. I did it to save bloodshed; that was my motive, and I am glad I did it."

chance and the fairest prospect of a peaceful termination of slavery," but he moved as an amendment that one-half of that sum should not be paid till the apprenticeship should have terminated. He thought this would act as a check upon the planters in their treatment of the apprentices. This amendment was thrown out.

Mr Buxton thus writes to a friend on the 1st of August:—

"I must tell you how comfortable and happy I feel to-day. Last night at twelve o'clock we got through the committee; the bill, therefore, for the abolition of slavery must pass this session, and may Providence make it a blessing to millions. To-morrow night we have the report, and on Monday the third reading. How grand it is to be so near the top of the mountain, which it has taken ten years to climb!"

The joy with which the abolitionists looked forward to the speedy termination of their labours in behalf of the slaves, was tempered by an event of deep interest to them—the death of Mr Wilberforce. The great leader expired on Monday the 29th of July, having, shortly before his death, exclaimed with fervour, "Thank God that I should have lived to witness a day in which England is willing to give twenty millions sterling for the abolition of slavery."

The announcement of his death was received by the House of Commons, then in the midst of the discussion on compensation, with peculiar feeling. Mr Buxton referred to the event, and in expressing his love and admiration for the character of Mr Wilberforce, applied to him the beautiful lines of Cowper:—

"A veteran warrior in the Christian field,
Who never saw the sword he could not wield;
Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit, as bright, as ready, to produce;
Could draw from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlighten'd page
His rich material—and regale the ear
With strains it was a luxury to hear."

Mr Buxton writes:—

"LONDON, *August* 8.

"I have been intensely engaged in winding up, or watching the winding up, of this the main object of my life. The bill passed its third reading last night, and I cannot but feel deeply relieved and thankful, great as are its faults. May a blessing be with it! The fullest toleration we have, I trust, obtained. And now the thing is done; and all the duty respecting it, which remains for us, is to do our utmost to render both the people of England and the negroes satisfied with it, and to labour for the religious instruction to the latter."

"On Tuesday, the 20th," writes Miss Buxton, "was the third reading in the Lords. Dr Lushington came in afterwards, unexpectedly, to dinner; he was just setting off for his holidays, and seemed very much pleased with the events of the session, which he discussed in the most lively manner. Lord Althorp said to him in the House, a few days ago, 'Well! you and Buxton have wielded a power too great for any individuals in this House. I hope we shall never see such another instance.' Among other incidents, it was mentioned that one day, in the House of Lords, Lord Grey went up to my father to speak to him about yielding the 'removal' question. The Duke of Wellington said, 'I see what the influence is under which you are; and if that individual is to have more power than Lords and Commons both, we may as well give up the bill.' All the Commons' ministers who were standing there were highly entertained."

On the 28th of August, the Bill for the Total Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions received the royal assent. "Would," wrote Miss Buxton to Miss Macaulay, "that Mr Wilberforce had lived one fortnight longer, that my father might have taken back to him FULFILLED, the task he gave him ten years ago!"

CHAPTER XX.

1834.

GREAT anxiety now began to be felt as to the manner in which the Emancipation Act might be received in the West Indies. The accounts of this event at length arrived, and proved to be highly satisfactory. The planters had received the new law without irritation; the negroes without excitement or insubordination; and the Colonial Legislatures immediately prepared to carry it into effect, on the following 1st of August.

On the 17th of March, Mr Stanley gave a most satisfactory account, in the House, of the continued tranquillity and prosperity of the West Indies, while awaiting the day of freedom. Mr Buxton is described as "full of joy at Mr Stanley's speech; he says, 'I go to sleep thinking of it, I wake thinking of it.'" Some one said to him in the House, in reference to Mr Stanley's statement, "This is worth living for, and dying for." Indeed the cordial tone, not only of his coadjutors, but of his late opponents also, was most gratifying to him.

TO MISS BUXTON, AT EARLHAM.

"54, DEVONSHIRE STREET, *February* 4, 1834.

"It is curious how many compliments we West Indian fanatics * have had on the success of of our measure. I have just been in the House; and among a great variety of congratulators, I saw ——, who said that nothing could be doing better; and he added, that having lately read my speeches from the first to the last, he must confess that he was surprised to find how true and sound they had been. Stanley whispered 'I congratulate you.' I answered, 'I congratulate *you*.'

"But I now come from the House of Lords, where Lord Grey, in reply to the Duke of Wellington, has been pronouncing a splendid eulogium on 'that beneficent measure,' as it was called in the king's speech, 'which extirpated the worst of all human evils;' and taunting the Duke with having been a prophet of evil, whereas nothing but good has as yet resulted. I am quite pleased. This is the impression which the events of the day have made on me."

TO MISS BUXTON.

"DEVONSHIRE STREET, *February* 14, 1834.

"We yesterday dined at Ham House to meet the Rothschilds; and very amusing it was. He (Rothschild) told us his life and adventures. He was the third son of the banker at Frankfort. 'There was not,' he said, 'room enough for us all in that city. I dealt in English goods. One great trader came there, who had the market to himself: he was quite the great man, and did us a favour if he sold us goods. Somehow I offended him, and he refused to shew me his patterns. This was on a Tuesday; I said to my father, 'I will go to England.' I could speak nothing but German. On the Thursday I started; the nearer I got to England, the cheaper goods were. As soon as I got to Manchester, I laid out all my money, things were so cheap; and I made good profit. I soon found that there were three profits — the raw material, the dyeing, and the manufacturing. I said to the manufacturer, 'I will supply you with material and dye, and you supply me with manufactured goods.' So I got three profits instead of one, and I could sell goods cheaper than anybody. In a short time I made my £20,000 into £60,000 My success all turned on one maxim. I said, I can do what another man can, and so I am a match for the man with the patterns, and for all the rest of them! Another advantage I had. I was an off-hand man. I made a bargain at once. When I was settled in London, the East India Company had £800,000 worth of gold to sell. I went to the sale, and bought it all. I knew the Duke of Wellington must have it. I had bought a great many of his bills at a discount. The Government sent for me, and said they must have it. When they had got it, they did not know how to get it to Portugal. I undertook all that, and I sent it through France; and that was the best business I ever did.'

"Another maxim, on which he seemed to place great reliance,

* He overheard one member say to another, "So, after all, the fanatics were right!"

was, never to have anything to do with an unlucky place or an unlucky man. 'I have seen,' said he, 'many clever men, very clever men, who had not shoes to their feet. I never act with them. Their advice sounds very well, but fate is against them; they cannot get on themselves; and if they cannot do good to themselves, how can they do good to me?' By aid of these maxims he has acquired three millions of money.

"'I hope,' said ——, 'that your children are not too fond of money and business, to the exclusion of more important things. I am sure you would not wish that.' Rothschild.—'I am sure I should wish that. I wish them to give mind, and soul, and heart, and body, and everything to business; that is the way to be happy. It requires a great deal of boldness, and a great deal of caution, to make a great fortune; and when you have got it, it requires ten times as much wit to keep it. If I were to listen to all the projects proposed to me, I should ruin myself very soon. Stick to one business, young man,' said he to Edward; stick to your brewery, and you may be the great brewer of London. Be a brewer, and a banker, and a merchant, and a manufacturer, and you will soon be in the *Gazette*. . . . . One of my neighbours is a very ill-tempered man; he tries to vex me, and has built a great place for swine, close to my walk. So, when I go out, I hear first, grunt, grunt, squeak, squeak; but this does me no harm. I am always in good humour. Sometimes, to amuse myself, I give a beggar a guinea. He thinks it is a mistake, and for fear I should find it out, off he runs as hard as he can. I advise you to give a beggar a guinea sometimes; it is very amusing.'

"The daughters are very pleasing. The second son is a mighty hunter; and his father lets him buy any horses he likes. He lately applied to the Emperor of Morocco, for a first-rate Arab horse. The Emperor sent him a magnificent one, but he died as he landed in England. The poor youth said very feelingly 'that was the greatest misfortune he ever had suffered;' and I felt strong sympathy with him. I forgot to say, that soon after M. Rothschild came to England, Bonaparte invaded Germany; 'The Prince of Hesse Cassel,' said Rothschild, 'gave my father his money; there was no time to be lost; he sent it to me. I had £600,000 arrive unexpectedly by the post; and I put it to such good use, that the prince made me a present of all his wine and his linen.'"

During the Easter recess, Mr Buxton thus writes from Northrepps Cottage:—

"*March* 27, 1834.

"Now for a history of my day. After a cheerful breakfast I lounged with a book to the Hall. It looks brighter than I expected; the day so fine, the flowers so abundant, and the birds so happy. I am going to sell my sheep, so there is an end of that sagacious speculation. Anna Gurney called for me there and took me first to Mr Law's, where I saw a great craniologist, who spent an hour over my head, and told me strange news of myself; some hitting the mark, and others far away from it.

"Then we drove to Trimingham, where we looked at fossils, and at the calm sea, and the land which I am to have for shooting. We got home about two o'clock, and she read to me till our quiet lively dinner; everything vastly agreeable. Moscow* was allowed to come in and dine with us. After dinner, reading and a trifle of sleep, and so on, till now. The only take off is, that I am quite out of my element, hardly knowing what to do in the country, at this time of year."

"*April* 13, 1834.

"My birthday is just passed: though I did not minute down my thoughts, it did not pass unheeded. How had I to exult and to thank my God for His mercy with regard to the slave question! On the 17th of March, Stanley, in answer to a question from me, gave a most highly encouraging account of what was going on in the West Indies;—the whip abolished, the negroes more industrious, no disturbance, no murmur, no ruin to the planter.

"Three years ago who dreamt of such a termination? What would I have given to secure such good tidings, even one year ago, on the 19th of March, the day of my motion! Do I say more than the truth, when I say I would have given my life?

"Blessed be God, for ever blessed, for this singular mercy!

. . . . . .

"I have now been walking in the garden, and having an hour of earnest prayer. I was much affected by looking at the expanse of the skies—the moon—the masses of cloud. They gave me a more realising view of Him who created them all, that wonderful Being, so great as to govern the universe, so merciful as to regard such a worm as I am, and to bear with my transgressions.

"Oh, that I might always carry with me the same awful sense of His presence, and such a realisation of His majesty and of His goodness!"

The 1st of August 1834, the day on which the emancipation of the slaves was to take place, was drawing near.

Five days before he thus looks forward to it in his book of meditations:—

"*July* 27, *Sunday.*

"On Friday next, slavery is to cease throughout the British colonies! I wished, therefore, to have a season of deep retirement of soul, of earnest prayer, and of close communion with my God, and, for this purpose, I went to a Friends' meeting. I began with earnest prayer for the influence of the Holy Spirit that He should take the helm in all our doings, and navigate us in peace and safety throughout our whole voyage. Then, in deep humiliation, in a sense of my own great guilt and ingratitude, I made confession of such sins as occurred to me, and pleaded hard with God, for Christ's sake, 'in whom we have redemption through His blood; even the forgiveness of sins.' This prayer was offered in some trouble of soul, and in a full sense that every other cord was broken, and that the only

* A favourite Newfoundland dog.

cable by which I could hold on was forgiveness through Christ. Then I returned thanks—I was sensibly affected with a view of God's dealings with me. Each one knows the history of himself, and many things are known to him which are concealed from others—perhaps, therefore, others could recount similar experience, but to me it appears that there has been a peculiar guidance over me; and that God, designing to commit to me in His goodness some share in the emancipation of the negroes, had originated contrivances, and ordered events singularly suitable for such a result. Then I prayed for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those 700,000 oppressed and persecuted children of our common Father, who will be liberated on that day. O Thou, who hast been indeed their merciful Deliverer, who, for the oppression of the poor and the sighing of the needy, hast arisen and set them in safety; add, we beseech thee, to all Thy benefits, by such an effusion and outpouring of Thy Spirit, as shall make them a people, peculiarly obedient to Thy commandments, and peculiarly visited by Thy presence, and that, as by Thy goodness they are changed from slaves to freemen, they may also be transformed from heathens into Christians; in deed, in spirit, and in truth.

"And now I commend next Friday to Thee, my merciful God. May it be a happy day, and the harbinger of many, many happy days, to one very very dear to me, and to multitudes for whom I have been favoured long to labour!"

The anxiously expected 1st of August at length arrived. It was kept very generally throughout England as a day of rejoicing. To Mr Buxton it was rendered memorable, not only by the consummation of that great work to which his heart had so ardently been given, but also because on this day his eldest daughter was married to Andrew Johnston, Esq., of Renny Hill in Fifeshire, M.P. for St Andrews. He thus alluded to the circumstance, in a letter to the Rev. Dr Philip at Cape Town: "I surrendered my vocation, and, next to Macaulay, my best human helper in it, on the same day; and I am not only well contented, but very happy, and very thankful, that she is so bestowed."

A large circle of his connexions assembled at his house on the occasion, and expressed the lively interest with which they had sympathised in his public labours, by presenting him with two handsome pieces of plate, in commemoration of the emancipation of the slaves.

It was indeed a day which called forth the expression of his deepest feelings of thankfulness, and of his most earnest desires for blessings on those near and afar off, to whom the day was one of such signal importance.

"Never had we," he said, "such a call for thanksgiving; never such occasion to pray for a blessing, as upon the work of this day. It is demonstration to our understandings, it is vision to our minds, that God has done it. We had no might, neither knew we what to do. The battle was not ours, but God's. The Lord has been with us."

TO MRS UPCHER.

"*August* 1, 1834, *Four o'clock.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND.—The bride is just off. Everything has passed off to admiration, and there is not a slave in the British colonies!

"Mark the seal, 'safe and satisfactory.'"

In the evening, the leading Abolitionists dined together at the Freemasons' Tavern; the Earl of Mulgrave, the late Governor of Jamaica, in the chair.

But many of those who shared in the festivities of the day, could not divest themselves of a feeling of uneasiness, when they thought of what might, at that very time, be passing in the West Indies. The period that intervened between August 1833, when Mr Stanley's measure became law, and August 1, 1834, when it was to take effect, had, indeed, passed away in unexampled tranquillity. But would not the gloomy predictions of the West Indians be now fulfilled? The bloodshed, the rioting, the drunkenness, and confusion they had so often foretold—would not these tarnish the lustre of this glorious deed of the British people?

It was, therefore, with feelings of deep solicitude, that Mr Buxton and his friends awaited the news from the colonies. He was at Northrepps Hall, when, on the 10th of September, a large pile of letters came in with the colonial stamps upon them. Well knowing that they would contain the long-looked for intelligence, he took them, still sealed, in his hand, and walked out into the wood; desiring no witness but One, of the emotion and anxiety he experienced. He opened them: and deep indeed was his joy and gratitude to God, when he found that one letter after another was filled with accounts of the admirable conduct of the negroes on the great day of freedom. Throughout the colonies the churches and chapels had been thrown open, and the slaves had crowded into them, on the evening of the 31st of July. As the hour of midnight approached, they fell upon their knees, and awaited the solemn moment all hushed in silent prayer. When twelve sounded from the chapel bells, they sprang upon their feet, and through

every island rang the glad sound of thanksgiving to the Father of all; for the chains were broken, and the slaves were free.

TO MRS BUXTON.

"BELLFIELD, *November* 23, 1834.

"I could not get a place in the Dorchester mail, so I took my place to Salisbury in another. Soon after I was seated, the Bishop of Barbadoes got in, and a great deal of very interesting conversation we had. He has received letters from many parts of his diocese, giving the most encouraging accounts. At Antigua seven important results have followed emancipation:—

"First: Wives and husbands hitherto living on different estates began to live together.

"Second: The number of marriages greatly increased. One of his clergy had married ten couple a week since the 1st of August.

"Third: The schools greatly increased; a hundred children were added in one district.

"Fourth: The planters complain that their whole weeding gang, instead of going to work, go to school.

"Fifth: All the young women cease to work in the fields, and are learning female employments.

"Sixth: Friendly societies for mutual relief have increased.

"Seventh: The work of the clergyman is doubled. One of the chapels which held 300 is being enlarged, so as to contain 900, and will not be large enough.

"The utmost desire is felt by the negroes for religious instruction, and their children are in every way as quick in learning as the whites. The most intelligent and influential of the Antigua planters tells him that the experiment is answering to his entire satisfaction. It will require some time, he says, for the planters to overcome their prejudices against machinery. He has not heard of an act of violence anywhere. The negroes are a very affectionate and docile race. He has seventy-seven clergymen in his diocese, and most of them zealous, good men. Twenty young men have been educated at Codrington College for the Church; and some of them, who are already ordained, are excellent ministers."

CHAPTER XXI.

1835.

THE best news continued to arrive from the West Indies of the industry and excellent behaviour of the negroes. Crime had rapidly diminished; marriages had considerably increased; education and religion were progressing. "The accounts from the West Indies are capital," writes Mr Buxton, March 7, 1835; "this puts me into excellent spirits. The truth is, my spirits rise and fall according to the intelligence from that quarter."

TO HIS SISTER, MISS BUXTON, NORTHREPPS COTTAGE.

"HOUSE OF COMMONS, *March* 16, 1835.

"I must give you a taste of the good news which I have received within this hour. Lord Aberdeen said yesterday that every thing was going on marvellously well in the West Indies. The negroes quiet, dutiful, diligent. 'It is quite amazing, it is contrary to reason, it cannot be accounted for, but so it is!' Just now Stanley came over to me, saying he had a letter from Lord Sligo* to-day, dated the 29th January. He read me the greater part of it, and most gratifying it was. The Christmas holidays had gone off more quietly than for many years. No case of riot had been reported, and the negroes had all returned to their work in good humour. The produce of the crop sent to England would be a good average one. Lord Sligo had recalled all his troops and vessels, (which had gone out to quell possible disturbances,) because everything was perfectly quiet. 'In short,' said Stanley, 'it is impossible that matters can be better than in the focus of danger—Jamaica; except it be,' he added, 'in Antigua.' Is not that something like good news? It makes me two inches higher for pride."

TO LORD SUFFIELD.

"*March* 1835.

"The news from every part of the slave colonies is most excellent. I hear this from a variety of quarters—friends, enemies, colonial bishops, and the Secretary of State. I saw a letter from the Bishop of Jamaica to the Bishop of London, saying everything that we used to say; I recollect one expression—'The industry of the negroes when working for wages has so entirely belied the apprehensions of the planters here, that I have not a doubt of the entire success of the emancipation measure.' In short, we have every reason to be happy and to be thankful."

The following memorandum, in Mr Buxton's handwriting, appears on the last page of a book of "Papers on the abolition of slavery:"—

"*January* 7, 1836.

"I have finished this collection of papers with a degree of satisfaction and thankfulness which I cannot express. My expectations are surpassed, God's blessing has been on this perilous work of humanity."

On the 22d of March he moved for a committee to inquire into the working of the apprenticeship system. His investigations on that subject had cost him much time and labour; and he now brought forth a mass of statistical facts, proving on the one hand that the negroes had behaved extremely well, and on the other that they had been harassed by vexatious by-laws and cruel punishments. "This is my

* Then Governor of Jamaica.

case," he said, in conclusion; "it shews at least this: that if the planters have misconducted themselves, they can find no excuse for it in the conduct of the negroes. There has been no disappointment in that quarter."

The committee was granted, and Sir George Grey (the Under Secretary for the Colonies) soon afterwards introduced a bill for enforcing, in Jamaica, certain measures in favour of the negroes.

The Aborigines' Committee had likewise been re-appointed, and Mr Buxton's attention to these two subjects, in addition to matters connected with them, occupied him closely. A friend, who spent a day at his house in Devonshire Street during the spring of this year, described it as "curious, and almost fearful, to witness the multiplicity of business, the wave upon wave of deep interests which poured in upon him. No time for air or exercise, no time for relaxation." His strength was barely equal to the claims upon it. "Oh, how we shall throw up our hats," he said, "when I am out of Parliament!"

Mr Buxton's friends were anxious that he should not expose his broken health to the fatigue of another Parliament. His uncle, Mr Charles Buxton, had written him a pressing letter upon this subject. In reply, he says:—

". . . . At present I am remarkably well, have no headache, and no complaint, except rather too good an appetite. I have received very encouraging accounts from the West Indies of the conduct of the negroes, and this I am sure will please you. Three years ago, it appeared by official returns, that in Jamaica there were 300,000 floggings with the cart-whip in a year. Last year, the number was reduced nine-tenths, from 300,000 to 30,000. The result being such, I grudge neither the time, nor the money, nor the labour, nor the health I have spent on this object; and I hope this consideration will make you better satisfied with my having been in Parliament. Can I, as an honest man, retire now, when I know for a certainty, that the effect of my motion in the House last year and the year before, has been to frighten the magistrates, and to save the backs of thousands of poor fellows from unmerciful floggings?

"You may say what you please, I know it is all in kindness for me, but I also know that if you were in my place, no personal consideration would be sufficient to prevail on you to abandon your duty."

In one of Mr O'Connell's speeches on some Irish question, he exclaimed, "Oh! I wish we were blacks! If the Irish people were but black, we should have the honourable

member for Weymouth coming down as large as life, supported by all 'the friends of humanity' in the back rows, to advocate their cause."

This allegation was jocosely made, but it was not entirely wide of the truth. Everything connected with the African race seemed to touch a chord of feeling in Mr Buxton's heart, and to bear a stronger sway over his sympathies than any other subjects could attain.

Yet the affairs of Ireland deeply interested him. "Never," he said, in 1835, "did I make any public subject, except slavery, a matter of so much prayer as this question of the Irish Church." Being as he was a thorough Whig, the natural bias of his mind was to support the measures of that party.

"But," said he, "the Irish Church is too sacred. I am a Protestant and a churchman, and I would not sacrifice an iota of either for all the political connexions in the world; so I was for some time a waverer; exactly what Hume called *a loose fish*, and which sort of loose fish he afterwards described as a wolf in sheep's clothing. Rumour ran that the Whigs were going to assign part of the Church revenues to the Roman Catholics. I resolved to resist, having come to the conclusion that if a surplus were proved, it ought to be given to religious education. To my satisfaction, I found that the plan I had worked out in my closet, and which I meant to adhere to, was precisely what they had resolved on."

Some of the reasons which had brought him to this decision, are thus mentioned in a rough memorandum :—

"£700 tithes from parish of Killeen :—you give £75 to your working curate, and £625 to Sir H. L., at Bath. Pray is this a religious use, or ecclesiastical? I have a butler; pay him £700. He, too rich to work, hires a deputy for £75. I say, as the deputy does the work, I may as well hire him; save £625. Is my establishment in danger? No; but more means to make it more perfect in other respects.

"Church not in danger. Sir H. L. in danger—of being obliged to do his duty."

He moved, however, as an amendment to Lord John Russell's motion, the insertion of the words "moral and religious," instead of "general" education; and a provision for the resumption of the surplus by the Church, when required.*

The following letter was addressed, after that debate, to his two younger sons at Northrepps :—

* Hansard, April 2, 1835.

"DEVONSHIRE STREET, *April* 3, 1835.

"MY DEAR FOWELL AND CHARLES,—C. will tell you how I have been engaged this week. It has been very laborious work. I did not get to bed this morning till broad daylight, near seven o'clock; so I suppose you were up before I was down.

"I have scarcely time to write, as I must be at the House of Commons again early, and there I shall be kept all night, I suppose; but I am quite equal to the exertion, and (I must confess it) somewhat cheered and exhilarated by the success of last night's effort. Work hard, my lads, and what you do learn, remember; fix it in your minds, and then write it in your commonplace books. The passage of my speech last night which was best liked was a quotation picked up by me some thirty years ago, when I was a youth—planted in my mind—and there it was when I wanted it. I have just been taking a delightful walk with your dear sister Priscilla, talking about slavery, and savages, and slave trade. Whenever I want to clear and brighten up my mind, I find nothing so effectual as an interchange of thoughts with her.

"Give my best love to the ladies at the Cottage, and tell them, that there, on the table before me, lie their Caffre papers, and I now and then glance at them, and smile at them as a treasure. Tell Miss Glover I am going to treat her as the king treated Daniel. I call upon her, not only to interpret my dream, but to tell me what my dream is.

"I want her to find a passage to this effect: 'Our religion braves the face of day; it does not skulk from truth.' But where is it? Oh, that is more than I know. I think it is either in a volume of South,* or in the fourth volume of Hopkins; and I think it is on the bottom of the left-hand page, and marked by me. If she can find it by these clear directions, and will send it to me, the world shall have it. I think you might ride over to Sheringham, to tell them all the news; they would be so pleased to find that we were pleased.

"I was delighted to have Edward at the House last night. I was sure of one auditor, who would listen attentively, and judge with partial acuteness."

Mr Buxton's readiness to go hand-in-hand with Dissenters in any work of mercy, and the hearty friendship with which he was honoured by many eminent Christians of different persuasions, gave rise to an impression, that he had little affection for the Established Church. This impression was entirely erroneous.

"I look up," he said, "to the Established Church with grateful

* He quoted this passage from Dr South, in his speech, in the following year. It stands thus:—"Some of their (the Roman Catholic) clergy deal with their religion as with a great crime; if it is discovered, they are undone. But our religion is a religion that dares to be understood, that offers itself to the search of the inquisitive, to the inspection of the severest and most awakened reason; for, being secure of her substantial truth and purity, she knows, that for her to be seen and looked into, is to be embraced and admired."

affection; I hail her as the great bulwark of religious truth, and I can conceive no calamity greater than any inroad made on her security. But I must avow that I am an enemy to every species of intolerance; justice to every man, charity to every man, are parts of the religion I profess."

Thrown, as he had been, amongst pious and benevolent Dissenters, he could not but rejoice in the deep fellowship of heart which existed between them and him; but he was not the less firmly attached to his own branch of the Church of Christ: he loved her sublime and solemn ritual, and he looked upon her as a most important means of preserving and propagating Christian truth. But he could not consider any particular form of Church government as having come from God, and therefore too sacred to be touched by the hand of man. Accordingly, his desire to increase the efficiency of the Church led him to seek the reform of those abuses which, during the lapse of ages, had crept into her institutions. But on this, as on all other important occasions, he did not act without deep deliberation and earnest prayer for guidance. In the lists * which he made almost every Sunday, of the subjects to be dwelt upon in his family prayers, "the Church" is, at this period, usually inserted as one on which he required help and direction.

For instance, the following notes for his family prayers were written by him when about to leave Northrepps in February 1836, to engage in the duties of the session:—

"In removing, we pray that that merciful Providence, which has stood round about us, may continue; sheltered, refreshed, counselled, strengthened by thee. Ward off danger, baffle our enemy, rob sin of its temptations; make us wholly, in inward thoughts and outward deeds, thine own.

"Be thou the mover of every work in which we engage.

"The counsellor to teach us what to say and do.

"The source of strength, confidence, and comfort.

"May we labour, not with eye-service, but in singleness of heart.

"Bless those rising from bondage, and all efforts on their behalf; the heathen, suffering from the evils and oppression of men, calling themselves Christians; and may a choice blessing rest on the efforts made for their physical advantage, and religious advancement.

"Bless the spread of education, and of Thy truth.

"Bless me in dealing with the Church; no self-will, no meaner motive than a desire to advance its interests."

Nor did he omit to use every means of rendering himself

* These were mere notes, to aid him in his family devotions; they were not the same as the papers of religious meditations, from which extracts have been given before.

fully acquainted with the case. Writing to the Bishop of London to request information on some points connected with it, he adds,—"I trust the importance of the subject, and my anxiety to be fully persuaded as to my vote upon it, will be my excuse for giving your lordship so much trouble." These examples prove, that whether his conduct on these Church questions did or did not deserve the severe reprobation which it received from many of his religious friends, it was, at least, not undertaken in a spirit of rash self-confidence.

The second reading of Lord John Russell's Irish Tithe Bill was brought forward on the 1st of June. Mr Buxton argued in favour of each of the three leading clauses, and strongly supported the plan of giving the surplus fund (after the new distribution of the Church revenues) to defray the expense of a system of education in which as much of the Bible was to be read as the Roman Catholics would allow.

"Do I say that this is enough? No! I lament that Scripture is thus sparingly doled out. . . . . But though this system does not do all, it does much. It teaches the Catholic to read — it gives him a portion of Scripture to read. I have better faith," he added, "in the truth of my religion, than to dread that instruction can damage it; and this is good, old, sound, Protestant doctrine."

He concluded by pointing out how little the harsh system hitherto pursued, had done towards the spread of truth:—

"How has it been," he asked, "that truth itself, backed by a Protestant establishment, by a Protestant king, a Protestant army, a Protestant Parliament — that truth itself, so far from advancing, has not kept her ground against error? My solution of the question is, that we have resorted to force where reason alone could prevail. We have forgotten that though the sword may do its work, — mow down armies, and subdue nations — it cannot carry conviction to the understanding of men; nay, the very use of force tends to create a barrier to the reception of that truth which it intends to promote. We have forgotten that there is something in the human breast — no base or sordid feeling, the same which makes a generous mind cleave with double affection to a distressed and injured friend, and which makes men cleave with tenfold fondness — deaf to reason, deaf to remonstrance, reckless of interest, prodigal of life — to a persecuted religion. I charge the failure of Protestant truth in converting the Irish upon the head of Protestant ascendancy.

"Protestant ascendancy! It sounds well enough in English ears. It seems to mean no more than the Church under the peculiar protection of the State. But happy had it been for the Protestant Church had Protestant ascendancy never been heard of — happy had it been had we dared to present our truth to the Irish, not in arms,

not in pomp, not decorated with the symbols of earthly power, but in that lowliness and gentleness which naturally belong to it.

"But I dare not trespass longer on the House. I like the bill, and shall vote for it: first, because tithe is adjusted; secondly, because stipend is to be measured by duty; thirdly, because education is to be granted. I like, and shall vote for the bill, lastly, because it bears no affinity to the old, overbearing system of Protestant ascendancy; and because, as I have so often said, it gives my faith fair play; because, at last, the Protestant religion will do herself justice. Stripped of her odious disguise, she will appear to the Irish what we know she is. She will appear in her natural, her peaceful, her charitable, her attractive character."

This speech gave great displeasure to many of his clerical friends, who conceived that he was bent on the ruin — though all he desired was the temperate reform — of the Irish Church establishment; and although "he had taken the opportunity," as he writes the day after the debate, "of separating himself from the Radicals, by condemning Hume's proposal for paying church-rates out of the money to be saved from bishops and deans."

CHAPTER XXII.

1836.

OVERWROUGHT with toil and anxiety, Mr Buxton was delighted to escape to Scotland in the beginning of August. While he was on this tour, the Marquis of Breadalbane, with true Highland hospitality, placed one of his moors at his disposal, and, accordingly, he remained for some time at Dalmally, and afterwards at Luib, * enjoying the sport afforded by the surrounding country.

Wishing to express his sense of this act of kindness, he applied to his relative, Mr Llewellyn Lloyd †, who was residing in Sweden, engaging him to use his best exertions to procure as many live capercailzie as possible, as a present to Lord Breadalbane.

The capercailzie, or cock of the woods, as it is well known, were in former times denizens of the Scotch forests; but the last specimen was shot about a hundred years ago in Perthshire. They are large birds, a full-grown cock weigh-

* While at Luib Inn, he was rendered uneasy, after two or three days, by the non-appearance of his letters. "I understood you had a post here," said he to the landlord. "Oh yes, sir," was the reply; "but the last day or two he has been out shooting with you."

† Author of "Northern Field Sports."

ing about twelve pounds; they live, for the most part, in larch forests, and are found throughout Sweden and Norway. Mr Lloyd sent advertisements for live capercailzie, to the villages up the country; these advertisements, according to the Swedish custom, were read from the pulpits after divine service, and in the course of the winter, thirteen cocks and sixteen hens were procured, which were placed under the care of Larry Banvill, (Mr Buxton's faithful Irish gamekeeper,) who had been sent to Sweden for the purpose, and by whom they were successfully conveyed to Taymouth Castle. After a time, they were all turned out into the larch woods at Taymouth, in which they have thriven so well, that they are now stated to amount to about four thousand; and as several other proprietors have followed the example, and have introduced them from Sweden, there is every reason to expect that this fine bird will become once more naturalised in Scotland.

TO THE BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

"RENNY HILL, FIFE, *September* 10, 1836.

"Our minds have been occupied of late, by a most sad event, the death of my wife's sister. I am sure you must remember Mrs Samuel Hoare of Hampstead. I hardly know how to speak of her as I ought; she was almost as dear to me as anything upon earth. For more than thirty years I have been united to her in the closest intimacy. In all that time I cannot recollect one moment's ruffle between us, or one word which betokened anything but affection or love. But what is my loss, compared with that of her husband and children? She came as near perfection as any human being I ever knew. It was not that she had one kind of merit carried to a great height. She possessed each accomplishment of a female and a Christian in the same rare degree. Soft and gentle as she was, she was no less steadfast, firm, and immovable. To these moral qualities, to the most winning manners, to a noble countenance, to the utmost refinement and delicacy, she joined an intellect of a very high order. Her views on every subject were broad and capacious. There was nothing petty about her. . . . . She laid out her talents to the best advantage, and never was idle. She read a great deal, and turned all her reading to account, as her Tracts, and her Hints on early Education evince. . . . . I know not why I pour out all this to you, but my mind and my pen can turn to no other subject."

After spending a few weeks at Renny Hill, the seat of his son-in-law, Mr Johnston, he returned to Northrepps Hall, and resumed the usual tenor of his life there during the autumnal months. Every year seemed to increase his delight at leaving behind him the cares and turmoils of London.

His system on coming into the country was, after a thorough arrangement of his personal affairs, to abandon the first few weeks to the relaxation of field sports. Towards the end of October he resumed his settled occupations, and was strict in devoting to them the best hours of the day. He thus adapted to himself the well-known lines of Sir William Jones :—

> "Secure six hours for thought, and one for prayer,
> Four in the fields for exercise and air,
> The rest let converse, sleep, and business share."

Six hours may appear a large proportion of his day to give to reflection, but his power of sustained and concentrated thought was unquestionably the most remarkable feature of his mind. Not, indeed, that he had a turn for meditation upon speculative or philosophical questions, but when (as very often happened) his decision was required upon practical matters of an intricate character, he would wrap his mind in reflection upon them, with an intensity not often equalled. He could not, like some, take a question by storm, and in a moment put every doubt to flight; he seemed to give every difficulty its fullest weight, and to balance the arguments on one side against the arguments on the other, with accurate care; giving them such close attention, that whatever might be going on around him, his mind could scarcely be diverted by anything from its track. When going to London with various important matters on his hands, he would often take a list of them with him, and, going regularly through it, would clench his mind upon them one after the other, till by dint of strenuous thought, he had mastered all their bearings and made up his mind for ever. Once decided, he seldom turned to the question again. His character may be said to have been formed *of a durable material*, so that an impression once effectually made, seemed never to be obliterated, scarcely even to lose the sharpness of its edge, by the lapse of years.* This quality was seen in lesser as well as in greater matters, and in no instance was it more displayed than in the important point of *order*. The love of order, and

* In early life he was often unpunctual in his attendance at church; but after hearing a sermon from the Rev. Samuel Crowther, on the duty of being present at the beginning of public worship and joining in the confession, he was thoroughly convinced, and was never again (as he said himself, thirty years after), late at church through carelessness.

power to maintain it, had certainly not been given him by nature; for many busy years of his life, his study, wherever it might happen to be, seemed a chaos of confusion, crowded with heaps of books and papers, letters and documents, unsorted and unlabelled,—nor would he allow any one to touch them. But in the year 1827, he was vividly impressed by a casual view of the order and precision maintained in one of the Government offices. After the illness of that year, when he could not bear mental application, a favourable opportunity presented itself for carrying out his resolution, to have his "papers in subjection." For three weeks he devoted himself, with his domestic helpers, to this task; every document in his possession, public and private, was looked over, folded to a certain size, with its contents accurately endorsed upon it, and then classified. The parcels of papers were tied up in boards made to the same size, legibly marked; the more copious subjects, such as slavery, filling many of these packets, under different subdivisions. Pigeon holes in his book-cases and other expedients were provided, by which these packets were so placed as to be instantly accessible. The work once accomplished, he never relaxed in it again; from this time to the end of his life every paper that came into his hands was subjected to the same regulations, and his various secretaries will remember the playful but unremitting strictness, with which he required the execution of his plans in this respect. The same principle extended to all his pecuniary affairs. He had some unalterable rules about money matters which preserved him from the dangers that might otherwise have resulted from his natural tendency to free expenditure. In his private accounts he was exact, but not minute; and once a year he thoroughly investigated the whole state of his property. At the beginning of his private ledger, the following sentences were written :—

"'What need so much provision for so short a journey.' Hopkins, vol. iv. p. 57.

"'What a nothing it is that we make so much of, and follow so greedily, and hold so fast!'—Baxter, vol. iii. p. 429.

"'To work our own contentment, we should not labour so much to increase our substance as to moderate our desires.'—Bishop Sanderson.

"'He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in

the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.'"—Jeremiah, chap. xvii. verse 11.

He was an excellent man of business, handling minute details with ease and unfailing patience, yet always keeping his eye fixed upon their general scope and bearing. Before undertaking anything, he would ponder over the matter for days together, weighing it and examining it again and again before he put his shoulder to the wheel. But though he was too deliberate to be a vehement man, he was in the highest degree energetic. He feared neither fatigue nor labour. When once resolved to act, he threw his whole heart and soul into the attainment of the object before him; every wish and feeling became swept into the vortex; nothing else seemed capable of attracting his interest, nor would he leave it till it was done, and done well.

Except that his hospitalities were more bounded by want of room, his life at Northrepps was much the same as it had been at Cromer Hall, domestic, yet social. The mornings were spent, as has been said, in his study or with his gun; and after dinner he usually lay upon the sofa, while some one read aloud to him from the passing literature of the day. Reading, in fact, filled up every leisure hour; he never tired of listening to it. "Well, what shall we read?" was the first question upon his entering the drawing-room He had a great taste for biography, perhaps still more for works of humour; but especially he had, as he said himself, an "insatiable thirst for military adventure." His love of poetry has been alluded to before, and he endeavoured to cultivate the same taste in those about him. Every Sunday evening his children were expected to repeat a passage of poetry, and he always required the utmost fluency and accuracy in the repetition: he insisted also on the reciter looking him full in the face while going through the task. He distributed his rewards freely, and his guests used to be playfully invited to join in the exercise, and received their half-crown with the rest. His frequent quotations (especially from Shakspeare, Pope and Dryden) shewed how thoroughly his mind was imbued with the writings of the principal English poets. Johnson's "Vanity of Human Wishes" was a favourite with him. On the well-known lines—

"In life's last scene, what prodigies arise—
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise."

"I take that," he remarked, "to be one of the truest things ever said in poetry; but," he added, "the word 'last' should be omitted. Life is *crowded* with 'fears of the brave, and follies of the wise.'"

With Cowper's poems he became acquainted somewhat late in life. He was with a shooting party at the seat of Mr Villebois, in Norfolk, when, being driven in by rain, and thoroughly wetted, he retreated to his room. It happened that there was no book there but a volume of Cowper's poems. He read them for hours, and ever afterwards took the greatest delight in them. For more modern poetry he had less taste, but to that of Sir Walter Scott he would listen again and again with the keenest enjoyment. When tea was finished, he usually walked into his study, and returned after a time with any letters or papers connected with his undertakings, that he might have received or written in the course of the day, and the reading of these, with the discussions upon them, which he encouraged, usually occupied the remainder of the evening. In all missionary enterprises he took the liveliest interest, listening with avidity to intelligence of their progress. Many private communications of this nature were also made to him; especially from Africa and the West Indies. He annually made himself complete master of the affairs and proceedings of the Bible Society, his fidelity to which never wavered. "I am ready to confess," he once wrote, "that there is no cause, not even emancipation itself, to which I would more readily give a helping hand than to the Bible Society." And some mention ought also to be made of the part he took in the establishment of the London City Mission. He was not alarmed, as so many were at that time, by the novelty and boldness of the experiment; its catholic character was completely to his taste, and it always received his generous support.

His family were early trained to take an interest in his pursuits, and to share in his hopes and fears; he encouraged the remarks and the criticisms even of its younger members, and would accept from them the most trivial assistance. Indeed, he seemed to have a strong feeling of

personal gratitude to any one who would share his solicitude for the welfare of his black clients. "From the time that I became closely connected with him," writes Mr Johnston, "I saw how much of his time and mind were given to his great objects, in his domestic circle, as well as in his study. He had a happy art of imbuing all those around him with his own feelings, and of inducing them to give him their most strenuous aid. He was, indeed, a delightful chief to work for, so stimulating, yet so indulgent, and so ready to repay, with lavish liberality, every effort, however trifling, made on behalf of those to whom he was devoting not labour only, but life itself. . . . His generosity, in fact, was unbounded—he seemed to watch for opportunities of heaping kindness upon those he loved."

The extreme tenderness of his feelings was especially shewn if any of them were in sickness or distress; or when he received them again under his roof after any lengthened absence. "Never, I think," observed one, "was such a welcome seen on any human face." His papers bear witness to his ceaseless prayers for the members of his family; they are individually mentioned, on every occasion, with discriminating affection, and striking, indeed, was the solemnity and the fervour with which he poured out his supplications.

As a parent he was remarkably indulgent: a trivial instance may be quoted from one of his letters to Mrs Buxton:—

"I write now about the coursing to-morrow. As —— did not behave well and kindly, you were quite right in deciding to deprive him of the sport to-morrow; but, as it is so very great a pleasure to think of him as happy and enjoying himself, I hope you will for this time excuse him, and that he will make a point of repaying the indulgence by very good behaviour. Thus we shall think of him as happy and good too." *

Nothing was more remarkable than the activity of his kindness in small things: the pains he would take to give pleasure. In the midst of his business he would help his children to find their lost playthings, or go out himself to buy what they might want; nor did they fear to interrupt his studies with the most trifling requests. At the time of his hardest work in London, he would often, on his way to the House, buy pictures, and conceal them in his waste-

* In order that this letter might be in time for the coursing, he sent a man over with it from Norwich, a distance of twenty-four miles.

paper basket, to enjoy the glee of his younger children, and their daily renewed astonishment at discovering them there in the morning.

His manner to them, as they grew older, is shewn in the following casual mention of it in a letter from one of his sons, then a mere boy :—

"I cannot help being struck with the exquisite tenderness of heart which my father always displays; his unwillingness to debar us from pleasure, the zeal with which he will make any sacrifice, or take any trouble to gratify us, is most surprising. One little example to-day will describe his whole conduct. He, being really unwell, was lying nearly asleep on the sofa, and observing me upon another, with my feet hanging over the side, he quietly got up, placed a chair under them, and then lay down again. His whole appearance, with his worn and thoughtful face, is so much that of a man whom one would approach with some sensation of awe, that these small, though exquisite, acts of tenderness are the more unexpected, and, consequently, the more pleasing."

He occasionally, but very rarely, gave direct admonitions. The following letter was addressed to one of his sons on entering Trinity College, Cambridge :—

"It is always a disappointment to me to be absent when my boys are at home; but I particularly regretted being away last week, as I think I might have done something for your shooting before you went to College. I need not, I hope, tell you of the extreme interest I take in the launch of your little skiff on the ocean of life, and how heartily I desire that 'soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave' may accompany your voyage; and that you may be safely piloted into the serene and lovely harbour prepared by the love of God. It is not often that I trouble my children with advice; and never, I believe, unless I have something particular to say. At the present time, I think I have that to say which is deeply important to your success in the business of life; nay, its effects may extend beyond the grave. You are now a man, and I am persuaded that you must be prepared to hold a very inferior station in life to that which you might fill, unless you resolve, with God's help, that whatever you do you will do it *well;* unless you make up your mind that it is better to accomplish perfectly a very small amount of work than to half-do ten times as much. What you do know, know thoroughly. There are few instances in modern times of a rise equal to that of Sir Edward Sugden. After one of the Weymouth elections, I was shut up with him in a carriage for twenty-four hours. I ventured to ask him what was the secret of his success; his answer was, 'I resolved, when beginning to read law, to make every thing I acquired perfectly my own, and never to go to a second thing till I had entirely accomplished the first. Many of my competitors read as much in a day as I read in a week; but, at the end of twelve months, my know-

ledge was as fresh as on the day it was acquired, while theirs had glided away from their recollection.'

"Let the same masculine determination to act to some purpose go through your life. Do the day's work to-day. At college I was extremely intimate with two young men, both of extraordinary talents. The one was always ahead of his tutor; he was doing this year the work of next year, and although, upon many parts of the subject, he knew more than his examiner, yet he contrived to answer what was actually proposed to him most scandalously;—while the other, by knowing perfectly what it was his business to know (though not confining himself to that), never, to the best of my recollection, failed to answer any question that was put to him.

"Again, be punctual. I do not mean the merely being in time for lectures, &c.; but I mean that spirit, out of which punctuality grows, that love of accuracy, precision, and vigour, which makes the efficient man; the determination, that what you have to do, *shall be done*, in spite of all petty obstacles, and finished off, at once, and finally. I believe I have told you the story of Nelson and his coachmaker, but you must hear it once more. When he was on the eve of departure for one of his great expeditions, the coachmaker said to him, 'The carriage shall be at the door punctually at six o'clock.' 'A quarter before,' said Nelson, 'I have always been a quarter of an hour before my time, and it has made a man of me.'

"How often have I seen persons who would have done well, if they would but have acted up to their own sense of duty! Thankful I am to believe that conscience is the established ruler over your actions; but I want to enlarge its province, and to make it condescend to these, which may appear to you minor matters, Have *a conscience* to be fitting yourself for life, in whatever you do, and in the management of your mind and powers. In Scripture phrase, 'Gird up the loins of your mind.' Sheridan was an example of the want of this quality. In early life, he got into a grand quarrel and duel, the circumstances of which were to his credit (always excepting the fighting the duel), but they were misrepresented: he came to town, resolved to set the British public right, and as Perry, the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, was his friend, he resolved to do so, through the channel of that paper. It was agreed between them that Sheridan, under a fictitious name, should write a history of the affair, as it had been misrepresented, and that he should subsequently reply to it in his own name, giving the facts of the case. The first part he accomplished, and there appeared in the *Chronicle* a bitter article against him, written, in fact, by himself; but he could never find time to write the answer, and it never was written: 'The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting.'

"All the men who have done things well in life, have been remarkable for decision of character. Tacitus describes Julius Cæsar as 'monstrum incredibile celeritatis atque audaciæ;' and Bonaparte, having published to all the world the day on which he should leave Paris to meet Wellington at Waterloo, did actually start on that day; but he had so arranged matters, and travelled with such expedition, that he took the British army by surprise.

"The punctuality which I desire for you involves and comprehends the exact arrangement of your time. It is a matter on which much depends; fix how much time you will spend upon each object, and adhere, all but obstinately, to your plan. 'Method,' says Cecil, 'is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much again as a bad one.' My letter, I see, is swelling into a sermon, but the day is fine, and Larry is waiting, so I must bring it to a close. Ponder well what I have said, and call on God to help you in arraying yourself in the qualities which I desire. If you mean to be the effective man, you must set about it earnestly, and at once. No man ever yet 'yawned it into being with a wish;' you must make arrangements for it; you must watch it; you must notice when you fail, and you must keep some kind of journal of your failures.

"But, whatever negligence may creep into your studies, or into your pursuits of pleasure or of business, let there be one point, at least, on which you are always watchful, always alive; I mean in the performance of your religious duties. Let nothing induce you, even for a day, to neglect the perusal of Scripture. You know the value of prayer; it is precious beyond all price. Never, never neglect it.

"Well, my dear boy, or man if you please, if I have been somewhat hard upon you in parts of this letter, you must excuse me, remembering that few have a father so deeply and tenderly attached as you have; or one, in general, more blind to defects, or more keen-eyed in the discernment of excellences.—Your most affectionate friend and father, T. Fowell Buxton."

A few of Mr Buxton's parliamentary reminiscences, as taken down by one of his friends, may be worth inserting:—

Mr. Buxton.—"I was several years in Parliament with Lord Castlereagh. He had some excellent qualities for a leader, and some very much the reverse. His temper was admirable, but then in speaking he was strangely obscure, and sometimes made the most queer blunders, so that occasionally, in the midst of a pathetic speech, he would say something which would make the whole House burst out laughing.

"Huskisson gave me a melancholy account of Castlereagh's last days. He had taken up the idea that none of his colleagues would speak to him. It made him miserable, and nothing could drive it from his mind. At length he was obliged to give a Cabinet dinner, but he was confident that none of the ministers would come, and most unhappy the idea made him. Huskisson was the first to arrive, and he was received with such extravagant warmth and cordiality, as was quite incomprehensible to him. The rest came, and everything went on smoothly, till at last he counted them and said, 'There is one too few—Palmerston is not here: the others are all my private friends, but you see Palmerston won't come.' His gloom instantly returned, and he did not speak again the whole evening. A day or two after he put an end to his life. Clerk says that no man would shoot himself if he took two doses of physic beforehand; and probably if poor Castlereagh had consulted a doctor, he might have been alive now.

"Nothing was ever so delightful as to hear Canning make a fine,

rich, poetical speech, and then Tierney pull it to pieces. But Tierney has no name, wonderful as he was. That is because he never *did* anything; but to be sure his talents were surpassing. He had the most delicate wit: everybody we hear now is coarse, blunt, and gross, compared to him. The House was extremely fond of him; let him rise when he would, it would listen to him with eagerness. He deserted his party, and joined Lord Sidmouth's government at last. It was, however, inscribed on his tomb, or proposed to be so, 'He lived without an office, and died without a debt.'

"Canning could be extremely entertaining too, but his speeches were evidently prepared and polished. He was the first man I ever heard speak in the House, and I remember asking my neighbour who it was. There was, also, when I first went into Parliament, another man of remarkable talents—Mr Ward, afterwards Lord Dudley and Ward. He, too, finished his speeches down to the minutest comma, and he only made one or two in a year.

"The first time I heard Chalmers was in a chapel on the other side of the river. It was so crowded that Canning and Wilberforce had to climb in at the window. Seven years after I hard Canning make that sermon the substance of a speech on the Catholic question.

"A certain member of Parliament changed his opinions rather rapidly after losing a place in the Government. Whereupon my friend S—— quoted Lord Bacon's words, 'The two great alterants of human opinion are *time* and *place*. Now,' said he, 'in this case *time* there has been none, so . . . .' but the remainder of the sentence was drowned in the laughter and applause of the House.

"Sir Robert Peel's Currency Act enormously increased the national debt. It certainly was one of the boldest measures that have been done in our time, but probably the author of it scarcely foresaw the whole result. But it was perhaps an act of justice. When Attwood opposed it, Mr Grote said he was like the unjust steward in the parable: 'How much owest thou? An hundred measures of oil—then take thy bill, sit down quickly, and write fifty.'

"When Peel's Currency Bill was passing, Hudson Gurney moved an amendment, in which six members only supported him; of whom I was one, and Mr Wodehouse another. Three days afterwards, however, the ministers, who had reconsidered the question, came down to the House, and carried that very amendment by a large majority. So we received the title of 'the seven wise men.'

"I lately dined in company with Sir James Scarlet. I asked him what was the secret of his pre-eminent success as an advocate. He replied, that he took care to press home the one principal point of the case, without paying much regard to the others. He also said that he knew the secret of being short. I find, said he, that when I exceed half an hour, I am always doing mischief to my client; if I drive into the heads of the jury important matter, I drive out matter more important, which I had previously lodged there."

One event of the year 1836 had been the marriage of Mr Buxton's eldest son to Catherine, second daughter of Samuel Gurney, Esq., of Ham House, Essex.

Soon afterwards, he writes to Mrs Buxton, from Bellfield:—

"It is now five o'clock; we dine at half-past; the interval, my dearest wife, is reserved for you. I have much enjoyed being here; I went off from London very comfortably, having the coach to myself almost the whole way. I slept the first stage and the last, so I had from seven in the morning till seven at night, to read and reflect; and I was very happy, and I feel very strongly, perhaps never so strongly, that mercy and goodness have followed me all the days of my life. Others may deny that there is a special Providence, but it is too barefaced a lie for me. What kept me from the Brewery at fourteen, sent me to college, and made me avail myself of its advantages? What led me to Earlham? . . . . What placed me in so prosperous a business, without which I never could have thought of public life? What placed me under Pratt's ministry, where my eyes were first opened to real truth; and what sent severe illness to confirm and ripen the impression made at Wheeler Chapel? What placed me in Parliament, and kept me there for nearly twenty years, in spite of almost desperate probabilities against me? What made my mother sow the seeds of abhorrence of slavery in my mind; and dear Priscilla exhort me to undertake the subject, when she was dying, and Wilberforce commit it to me, when he became unable to continue the task? I could go on till the dinner-bell to-morrow evening, recounting the instances in which I have seen the finger of a blessed and divine Providence.

"I looked yesterday and to-day, in walking through this serene place, at the present posture of our affairs, and I could see only cheering prospects and causes of deep thankfulness. . . . . But in none have I had a greater sense of comfort and of God's mercy than in one who, though not here to cheer us, is in the regions of perfect bliss. I can contemplate his state, and the dealings of Providence with us, as concerns him, and be very thankful, and very sure, in feeling as well as in reason, that all is right."

In his often repeated visits to Bellfield, he shewed himself in quite a new character. His uncle, who was very fond of him, and towards whom he felt like a son, treated him, to the last, as quite a young man, and it was amusing to observe the happy mixture of deference and decision, playfulness and respect, with which his uncle's continual admonitions, especially with regard to his health, were received by one who was generally somewhat impatient of the uncalled-for interference of others.

From his numerous letters to his uncle, the following may be given:—

TO CHARLES BUXTON, ESQ., AT BELLFIELD.

"NORTHREPPS HALL, *December* 31,
Eleven o'clock at night.

"MY DEAR UNCLE,—In the first place, as the old year is just go-

ing, I must wish that the new one may be a really happy one to you and my aunt. I hope that you both will pass through it in health and comfort. No nephew had ever more reason for this sincere wish than myself, and few nephews have so truly desired it. The termination of one year and the beginning of another is always a time of much reflection with me. I look back to the past year, and see innumerable errors and sins; and forward to the coming year, and consider that, before it terminates, I may be called to judgment. Eternity is at hand with us all. Happy they, and only they, who know that they have no merit which can save them, who look for mercy only through Christ, who repent of past sins, desire to do God's will while on earth, and believe on Christ, that He can and will save those who obey Him, and trust in Him. I know you are never offended by my talking on such subjects, and they naturally spring up in my mind just as a new year is coming."

The thoughts expressed in this letter were brought strongly home to him but a short time afterwards, by the sudden death of his sister-in-law, Lady Harriet Gurney, for whom he entertained the warmest affection. On the day of her funeral he wrote home:—"In seeing her coffin committed to the vault, I could not but feel, that it contained all that remained of as much beauty and true loveliness of mind, body, and spirit as we ever saw removed from this world."

As usual, the year was closed by him with an enumeration of the mercies received during its course. To his list of domestic blessings, he now adds his little grandson, who, he says, "is a source of delight and infinite amusement."

He proceeds:—

"The accounts from the West Indies of the conduct of our negroes is gratifying in the last degree; so that that subject, which, for eleven years, was a source of daily disquietude, is now the refreshment and solace to which I continually turn. The history of the past year is of favours heaped upon me and mine, on the right hand and on the left."

CHAPTER XXIII.

1837, 1838.

In the course of the year 1834, Mr Buxton had investigated the question of the treatment of the native tribes in our various colonies, and had moved for a committee to inquire fully into the subject. This committee sat for three sessions, and obtained a vast amount of valuable information, and the drawing up of its report was intrusted to Mr Buxton as its

chairman. He was anxious to render this report a sort of manual for the future treatment of aboriginal nations, in connexion with our colonies. Its object was to prove, first, the destructive cruelty to which the native tribes had generally been subjected: and, secondly, that wherever they had received equitable and humane treatment, they had increased in numbers, acquired the arts of civilized life, and accepted the blessings of religion.

During this session, he was chiefly occupied in completing and carrying this report through the committee. Before it was printed, it was carefully revised by Sir George Grey, and it appears to have had considerable weight with the Government in promoting the equitable treatment of the natives in our colonial dominions.

It was with peculiar satisfaction that he saw this work completed; for it was very doubtful whether he would long have the opportunity of continuing his exertions in the House of Commons. The death of the King, on the 20th of June, produced an immediate dissolution of Parliament, and Mr Buxton's return for Weymouth had never before appeared so insecure.

TO CHARLES BUXTON, ESQ., BELLFIELD.

"SPITALFIELDS, 1837.

"MY DEAR UNCLE,—You must not be alarmed about the election. . . . . I really think I should not be happy, or feel that I had done my duty, if I were to retire. I think (though, perhaps, it is absurd vanity to say so,) that my being in Parliament is of some little consequence to the negroes in the West Indies; to the oppressed natives of our colonies; and to the inhabitants of Africa exposed to the slave trade. As the first are nearly one million, the second three millions, and the third a great many millions, it would not be right to give up a chance, if it were only a chance, of being returned, merely because there may be some little humiliation to myself in being turned out.

"I don't care a straw about the disgrace. If I am turned out, I can't help it: I have done my best, and shall be satisfied. But if I were to go out of my own accord, I think my conscience would reproach me. Besides all which, I do not think they can turn me out quite so easily as they imagine."

The following letter was addressed to Mr Joseph John Gurney, who was about to proceed to America, on a religious visit to the Society of Friends:—

"HAM HOUSE, *June* 25, 1837.

"I think it is hardly possible for any one, at least of our harder sex, to feel more than I do, in all that concerns your going to

America. We have been bound together for not far short of forty years in one cloudless friendship. As boy and man, I have been partner in all your fortunes, and you in mine. I do not believe you ever, by word or deed, gave me a momentary vexation. You, I dare say, are not aware how you have refreshed and encouraged me in my career; in truth, I look to you with almost boundless affection and gratitude. It is against the grain with me to let you go without seeing you again, but I fear it must be so. After much deliberation, I have resolved to go down to Weymouth. The way in which Parliament affects my health has had great weight in the one scale, but, in the other, there are three great points—West India negroes, East India slavery, and the Brazilian slave trade. If it were the West India negroes alone, I believe I should retire, because nine-tenths of the work is done, and because there is feeling enough in the country to accomplish the remainder, and persons enough willing and able to call forth that feeling. I am steadfast in the belief, that that great experiment has been, and will continue to be crowned with more complete success than the most sanguine among us anticipated. I know very well that evil influences are working hard against it, and that thousands of the negroes are exposed to cruel injustice. Nevertheless I do rejoice, and will rejoice in the extinction of slavery; and the more I see of the posthumous brood, the more I rejoice in the death of the old parent dragon.

"And now, my dear brother, if I do not see you before your departure, I take leave of you with a heart full of love, with the most pleasant and grateful remembrance of you, and with the most earnest prayers for your safety, comfort, and peace, for the full success of your mission, and for your fruition of all that is contained in these words, 'Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.'"

On the day that the Queen dissolved Parliament, he writes to Mrs S. Gurney, whose aged mother he had visited on the previous day:—

"*July* 17, 1837.

"I this day saw our youthful Queen surrounded by all the chief officers of state, herself wearing a crown of diamonds, and arrayed in royal robes, and the House of Lords filled with all the great ones of the country. She delivered an admirable address to the Parliament, with the utmost sweetness of voice and the most exquisite grace of manner; and yet this spectacle has left a less pleasing, a less lively impression on my mind than the sight which I had yesterday the pleasure of witnessing,— of an aged Christian, refined and purified, her work completed, waiting in patient cheerfulness the will of her Lord. That is a sight full of instruction and consolation. So much must I say, my dear sister, and you may repeat it to her who is ready to depart and to be with Christ."

In July, he went down to the election at Weymouth.

TO MRS BUXTON.

"BELLFIELD, *July* 25, 1837.

"Here I am looking out on this splendid view; nothing can be more calm. I have passed a restless night, and have been awake for hours.

"This day will, I expect, make an entire revolution in my vocation. I have no expectation of being returned. When I look at some of the arts that have been employed, I am half ready to be provoked; but when I turn to the Creator of these fields, and those waters, and remember that all events are in His hands, that nothing occurs but at His bidding, I am restored to full peace. He ordereth all events, and that is reason enough for satisfaction; and though, for the moment, we are carried away by the current, it is not very difficult to perceive that we shall derive a hundred family benefits from my exclusion from Parliament. I look upon myself as an old horse turned out to grass, and it is folly to worry myself by supposing that other and better steeds will not be found to do the work.

"I must now get ready. I do not expect to be in any way disturbed by the events of the day; but before it closes I shall be a man of leisure; that is no mean blessing: a man, not slaving himself to death, but with time to walk, to read, to sleep, to reflect — and better than these, time to pray.

"One o'clock. Well, my dearest wife, your wishes are realised; the troubles and worries of Parliament are over with me; and now we must be as happy, as healthy, and as long-lived as possible. I am perfectly well satisfied with the result, and view it as a release from a vast deal of labour."

That the cause of this defeat was not any diminution of personal attachment to him on the part of his constituents, was evident from the strong expressions of grief on all sides at his rejection. But the Tory party had for some years been increasing in local influence, and did not scruple to employ a degree of intimidation till then unknown in the borough. In Mr Buxton's farewell address to the electors he distinctly states: —

"During twenty years in elections, seven of which have been severely contested, I have had the opportunity of ascertaining the motives which actuate almost every individual in this borough, and I gladly state this fact, so honourable to the poorer electors of this town, viz., that I never paid any man one sixpence for his vote, and never, except in two instances, was asked to do so."

TO JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY, ESQ., IN AMERICA.

"UPTON, *July* 30, 1837.

"Before I went down to Weymouth, I began to fear; for one of my supporters told me that if I wished to secure the election, it would be necessary to open public houses and to lend money (a gentle name for bribery) to the extent of £1000. I of course declined. It

might or it might not be my duty to get into Parliament, but it could not be my duty to corrupt the electors by beer and bank-notes.

"At the close of the poll I went with Edward to the booth, where my opponents and their friends were collected, shook hands with them, wished them joy, walked about the town for half-an-hour with Barlow and Edward to cheer up my friends, who were sadly out of spirits, and then went to Bellfield, where we passed a very cheerful evening; and up to this moment, not one shade of regret on my own account, however slight, however transient, has passed over my mind, at the memory of my departed honours.

"The next morning, about eighty of my constituents came up. I ran to the balcony, and began a cheerful speech; but I soon found I was entirely out of tune. I went down amongst them, and then made them an oration. It could not help being a feeling one; certainly I never saw a greater appearance of regret. . . . . I have not half described the manifestation of feeling which took place in the town. The children set themselves to work to collect subscriptions to give me a piece of plate. The men are also doing the same thing on their part. The very Tories, they say, are disconsolate! In the evening, several of the working men who had not joined the procession in the morning, came up to bid me farewell; and at six o'clock the next morning, when I got into the coach, there was an assemblage of them looking sadly downcast. Spite of all this lamentation, I have been in great glee the whole time. I am right glad that I stood—right glad that I have got a holiday. My own impression is, that I could not have stood the fatigues of Parliament many sessions more; and perhaps this turning out to grass may, in the long run, enable me to do more work, if I should have the privilege of being called to it. I saw ——, who said more about the regret of Government, than I should like to repeat. On the other hand, Dr Holland has sent me a message by Samuel Hoare, of warm congratulation.

"I had fully resolved, had I continued in Parliament, to have sent you a kind of journal of notable events; but in my present non-effective condition, I am not likely to have anything more interesting to tell you, than the history of the pigs and poultry at Northrepps. As I leave Parliament for health, I do not by any means intend to defeat that end by dedicating myself to any other objects. I mean, for conscience' sake, to ride, shoot, amuse myself, and grow fat and flourishing."

From no less than twenty-seven different places were proposals made to Mr Buxton to stand as a candidate; but he felt at liberty to take advantage of the opportune repose afforded him, and accordingly declined them all.

TO CHARLES BUXTON, ESQ., AT BELLFIELD.

"*October*, 1837.

"I take shooting very easy this year, having always a shooting, pony with me; he is a wonder, has as good action as your old leader, and *is* as handsome; as quiet as a lamb, and strong enough to carry

and sometimes does carry, Mr Hoare and myself together, eats bread and cheese, drinks beer, is a particularly good judge of porter, and prefers ours."

TO EDWARD N. BUXTON, ESQ.

"*November*, 1837.

"I have again made an alteration in my gun-stock, contrary to your advice. I have shot execrably all the year, and could stand it no longer, so I employed a Holt carpenter to hew me a stock, according to my own fancy, out of the trunk of a tree. It is in its primitive simplicity, and is so wide as to 'contrive the double debt to pay,' of stock while shooting, and table at luncheon; but rough and awkward as it is, I shall, I trust, take the conceit out of the young men with it.

"I have been calculating that since Parliament closed I have ridden 500 miles, and walked 1500.

'Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,
Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught.
The wise, for cure, on exercise depend.'

"So sings Dryden, and what he preached I practise.

"I shall send you a basket to-night, as proof that my log of a gun-stock can do execution. . . . We are very happy here. If you catch the influenza, lie up at once—*principiis obsta*."

At the end of 1837, a work was published by Messrs Sturge and Scoble, who had visited the West Indies, describing the condition of the negro apprentices, and such general indignation was excited by their narrative, that from all parts of the country were delegates sent to London, in the beginning of 1838, to urge the discontinuance of the apprenticeship system. Mr Buxton, for some time, refused to join them, which excited great displeasure among some of his old friends.

On the 23d of March he received a letter from Dr Lushington, urging him to come to town and meet the delegates, and he accordingly left Northrepps for London, and after much deliberation he determined to join them.

"I went," he says, "to the meeting of the delegates; they were very cordial. I told them freely my mind, and some of it was not much to their liking, I dare say. Among the rest that I praised Glenelg."

On the 30th of March Sir George Strickland brought forward a motion for the abolition of the apprenticeship, but it was lost by a majority of 64. Mr Buxton thus describes the evening, having been present under the gallery:—

"LONDON, *March* 31, 1838.

"I am alive, after having been in the detestable position of having

to sit for ten hours, last night, in the House of Commons, to be shot at by everybody, without the possibility of firing one round in return. I would have given something to be allowed to speak, and I literally was two or three times upon the point of springing up. Gladstone, Lord John Russell, Grey, &c., would have it that I was a friend to the apprenticeship, because I sold an unavailing division on it, in committee, for the solid profit of getting them to insert a clause for unqualified freedom, when the apprenticeship should cease."

In consequence of what had been stated in this debate, Mr Buxton addressed a letter to Lord John Russell, in which he proved that he had been throughout a steady opponent of the apprenticeship system.

He went about the same time to see Mr Macaulay, whom he found very ill. "God bless you and yours," said his aged friend, "I sympathise in all your trials, I concur in all your opinions, and your visits to me are as water to the thirsty soul." He died soon after, just before the complete consummation of all his labours; for in the same month, Sir Eardley Wilmot gained, by a majority of three, a motion against the apprenticeship; and the planters afterwards agreed to surrender it on the 1st of August 1838. "The apprenticeship is abolished," writes Mr Buxton; "thank God for that."

"I bless God for the event," he says, in a letter to Mr Sturge: "I bless God, that He, who has always raised up agents such as the crisis required, sent you to the West Indies. I bless God, that during the apprenticeship, not one act of violence against the person of a white man has, as I believe, been perpetrated by a negro, and I cannot express my grateful exultation that those whom the colonial law so recently reckoned as brute beasts, 'the fee simple absolute whereof resided in their owners,' will so soon be invested with the full rights of man. . . . . Let none of us forget that those who are emancipated will be assailed with many an attempt to curb and crush their liberty; nor that two millions of human chattels in the East Indies require our protection; nor that the slave trade, of all evils the monster evil, still defiles and darkens one quarter of the globe. May that same public voice, which has now been so happily exerted, and under the influence of that same gracious Lord, who has wrought its present victory, never be hushed while a taint of slavery remains!"

TO THE HON. MRS UPCHER.

"ATHENÆUM, *May* 23, 1838.

"I must write a line to tell you that Sturge and that party whom we thought all in the wrong, are proved to be all in the right. A resolution for the immediate abolition of the apprenticeship was carried by a majority of three last night. The intelligence was re-

ceived with such a shout by the Quakers, (myself among the number,) that we strangers were all turned out for rioting! I am right pleased."

CHAPTER XXIV.

1838.

On quitting Parliament, Mr Buxton had looked forward to a period of repose; but this expectation was not realised. Even before that time, an idea had suggested itself to his mind, the development of which proved more than sufficient occupation for all his remaining years.

"I well remember," writes one of his sons, "the commencement of that long train of toils, anxieties, and sorrows. While my father and I were staying at Earlham, in the beginning of the summer of 1837, he walked into my room one morning, at an early hour, and sitting down on my bedside, told me that he had been lying awake the whole night, reflecting on the subject of the slave trade, and he believed he had hit upon the true remedy for that portentous evil."

Two years before this time, he had moved an address for making our treaties on this subject with foreign powers more stringent, and the penalties of the crime more severe. The idea that now struck him so forcibly, was this,—that "though strong external measures ought still to be resorted to, the deliverance of Africa was to be affected, *by calling out her own resources.*"

For some months he was compelled to defer the following up of this new train of thought; but on reaching home at the fall of the year, he addressed himself to the pursuit with all his heart and mind, and never was his character shewn more clearly than in his conduct of this great affair.

His task was twofold:—on the one hand, he had to prove the magnitude of the evils now existing, in the human traffic, and consequent condition of Africa:—on the other, he had to point out the capabilities of Africa, and thence to deduce the possibility of her becoming peaceful, flourishing, and productive, by the force of legitimate commerce.

While he himself was occupied in elaborate calculations drawn from official documents, respecting the extent and desolating effect of the trade, he set others to work in col-

lecting proofs of the productiveness and commercial resources of Africa.

TO EDWARD N. BUXTON, ESQ.

"NORTHREPPS HALL, 1838.

"Andrew Johnston and I are working like dragons at the slave trade—a task as interesting in its prosecution, and promising to be as important in its results, as any that I ever had the honour to be engaged in. I only wish that the number of the hours in each day were doubled, and the number of minutes in every hour quadrupled."

Having come to London prepared with all his statistical details, he spent the spring, assisted by Mr Johnston, in verifying them by evidence of first-rate authority, both naval and mercantile. When he had done this, he laid an epitome of his plans before different members of the Cabinet; by several of whom a disposition was evinced to investigate the subject further, and he was requested to prepare his views in a more developed form by the beginning of the recess. Accordingly, at the end of May, he went to Leamington, where he was joined by Mr Scoble, an able and hearty fellow-labourer; and by Mr M'Queen, who was intimately acquainted with the geography and productions of Africa, and who had some years before declared his conviction, that the true way to abolish the slave trade would be to supplant it by lawful commerce. Aided by these gentlemen, he devoted himself sedulously to the task, frequently working at it about twelve hours a day.

This "Letter to Lord Melbourne" was intended exclusively for the members of the Government, and, accordingly, but twenty copies were printed.

TO HIS SISTER, MISS S. M. BUXTON, NORTHREPPS COTTAGE.

"*August* 14.

"Now I must tell you a little about my adventures. Yesterday I saw almost all the ministers, and almost all their secretaries; and held the same language with them all. I have put my views in print, in order to tempt you to read them. While Parliament is sitting I expect nothing of you, but, promise me this, that as soon as the recess begins, you will read my book before you take up any other subject. Give me an unequivocal yes or no; and, if you say 'Yes,' act with vigour. I have got a specific promise from each, that, without delay, they will read, consider, and decide. I saw yesterday Lords Melbourne, Glenelg, Palmerston, and Howick; Hobhouse, Spring Rice, Grey, Stanley, Wood, Porter, Anson, Stephen. The last sent me word that he was very busy, so our interview must be very short. I walked into his room, put the book into his hand,

and, without saying a word, walked out again. He called out, 'What does this mean?' 'The shortest interview you ever had with anybody,' said I. 'Ah,' said he, 'the head is short enough, but there's a terrible long tail to it.' . . . . In short, I was remarkably well pleased with my day's work. Got home near twelve o'clock. The waves of the day too agitated for easy getting to sleep."

TO J. J. GURNEY, ESQ.

"*August* 18.

"To begin with that which has chiefly occupied my attention for many months past; last November I started on a pilgrimage through all the books and parliamentary documents connected with the slave trade. I began from the very beginning, and, partly in person, still more by deputy, I traversed the whole subject; and such a scene of diabolism, and such an excess of misery, as I had to survey, never, I am persuaded, before fell to the lot of an unhappy investigator. Will you believe it, the slave trade, though England has relinquished it, is now double what it was when Wilberforce first began; and its horrors not only aggravated by the increase of the total, but in each particular case more intense than they were in 1788? Will you believe it, again, that it requires at the rate of a thousand human beings per diem, in order to satisfy its enormous maw? . . . . How glad have I been to have escaped from the turmoils of Parliament, and to have my mind and my time my own, that I might bestow them without interruption on this vast mass of misery and crime!"

He recommended the adoption of two preliminary measures;—one, the concentration upon the coast of Africa of a more efficient naval force; the other, the formation of a chain of treaties with the native chiefs of the interior. These two measures were not brought forward as the remedy itself, but merely as clearing the way for its operation. "The real remedy, the true ransom for Africa, will be found," says Mr Buxton, "in her fertile soil;" and he drew up, from a vast variety of authorities, an account of the boundless resources which West Africa contains.

The following were some of the specific steps suggested by him for turning the attention of the Africans from their trade in men to the trade in merchandise:—That the British Government should increase the efficiency of the preventive squadron on the coast—should purchase Fernando Po, as a kind of head-quarters and mart of commerce—should give protection to private enterprises—and should enter into treaty with the native chiefs for the relinquishment of the slave trade, for grants of lands to be brought into cultivation, and for arrangements to facilitate a legitimate trade.

He proposed that an expedition should be sent up the

Niger for the purpose of setting on foot the preliminary arrangements in Africa for the agricultural, commercial, and missionary settlements; of entering into treaties with the native chiefs; of convincing the negroes of the uprightness of our intentions; and of ascertaining the state of the country along that vast tract of land which is traversed by the river Niger.

A company was also to be formed, by private individuals, for the introduction of agriculture and commerce into Africa. This was to be effected by sending out qualified agents to form settlements in favourable situations; to establish model farms; to set up factories, well-stored with British goods, and thus to sow the first seeds of commerce; and, in short, to adopt those means, which have been elsewhere effectual, in promoting trade, and the cultivation of the soil. He admitted entirely that this company must not expect speedy returns, although he strongly maintained the reasonable prospect of eventual profit.

Upon private individuals, also, would devolve the responsibility of co-operating with the religious societies in sending out a strong force of those upon whom he especially depended for the deliverance of Africa, missionaries and native teachers.

He dwelt much upon the importance of making use of native agency for this purpose.

"The climate of Africa," he writes to the Rev. Hugh Stowell, "presents an obstacle to European agents being employed in the work to any extent, and we must look to the natives themselves to be the agents in this great enterprise. This is no new scheme, for you will observe that it has been tried in various quarters of the globe with considerable success, and various denominations of Christians are following out the plan, with zeal and perseverance, in India and Africa."

CHAPTER XXV.

1838, 1839.

Mr Buxton watched with great anxiety the effect that might be produced on the ministers by the statements thus laboriously prepared. In the beginning of September he was summoned to town by Lord Glenelg; he writes thence—

TO ANDREW JOHNSTON, ESQ.

"COLONIAL OFFICE, *September* 5, 1838.

"Lord Glenelg sent me word on Monday, that he wanted an hour's conversation with me. With the ardour natural to authors, I construed this into a slave-trade conference, the acquiescence of the Government in my plan, and Africa almost delivered. I have now been waiting till half of my hour has elapsed, so I am getting fidgety and fearful that my dreams will not be realised. However, I believe that a good Providence has undertaken the management of this business, and therefore I will not be troubled.

"Near five o'clock. Thank God! I say it with all my heart, thank God! the Government, says Lord Glenelg, are deeply interested by my book. Melbourne writes to him strongly about it. The Cabinet meet on Friday on the subject. Glenelg says they accede to all I have said as to previous failures. They think I have greatly underrated the extent, and still more the mortality. In short, he was convinced, to my heart's content. I have since seen Lushington; he is delighted with the book; accedes to it with all his heart. In short, a happy day."

"I am highly pleased," he writes home, "and very, very thankful, and feel very keenly. What am I, that this mercy should be heaped upon me?"

TO JOSEPH J. GURNEY, ESQ.

"NORTHREPPS HALL, *December* 7.

"Within the last month, I have been to town and have had many interviews with members of the Cabinet, and I find that my book has made a deeper impression upon them than I had ventured to hope for. They all admit that the facts are placed beyond all dispute. They tell me, that they want no further evidence whatsoever of the extent and horrors of the trade; and they admit, in very strong terms, that they are converts to the views which I have developed. In short, the subject now under consideration is, how they shall act? I have been embodying my views in nine propositions, and have stated *seriatim* the steps they ought to take, and the order in which they should be taken. I expect that this slave-trade question will find me in employment for the rest of my days, and my hope is that you and I may work together in it for many years to come. I am not so sanguine as to expect that so vast a work will be rapidly executed. Our favourite text is, 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.'"

The Government had acceded to his theory; it now remained to be seen whether they would adopt his practical suggestions. He writes from London—

"I was ushered into the presence of Lord Glenelg, muttering to myself, 'O God, give me good speed this day!' . . . . I soon found that my nine propositions worked *admirably*. They were formally discussed in the Cabinet. Glenelg intimated that the ministers were unanimous, and that they had resolved, with some modifications, to

act upon them. I was told that Lord —— said it was the boldest conception that had been struck out in our days. . . . . I am now going to Upton to dinner. God grant I may hear good accounts from Northrepps, and then I shall be full of gladness of heart. Is not my news delightful?

"I did not sleep well," he tells Mr Johnston; "who could expect it, after such a day; after finding that it was intended to realise my most intense desire? I was also delighted at learning at the Colonial Office, that the Kat River Hottentots, Caffres, West Indian negroes, were all doing beautifully."

The result of these interviews was a request on the part of Government, that he should enlarge and publish his work to arouse the public mind, but it was desired that the practical suggestions should be kept back till they had more fully determined on their course. The resignation, shortly afterwards, of Lord Glenelg was deeply regretted by Mr Buxton. Lord Normanby, however, adopted the views of his predecessor, and the whole Cabinet appears to have considered the advantage which would accrue to England, as well as to Africa, from the opening of so vast a field of commercial speculation, as sufficiently important to warrant their attempting to carry them into effect.

TO THE REV. J. M. TREW.

"I am more and more impressed with the importance of normal schools in the West Indies. It is not only that there will be a great demand for schoolmasters, but I have a strong confidence that Africa will, ere long, be opened to commerce, civilisation, and Christianity; and then there will be need, indeed, of educated and religious black schoolmasters. The idea of compensation to Africa, through the means of the West Indies, is a great favourite with me; and I think we shall see the day when we shall be called to pour a flood of light and truth upon miserable Africa. Pray, therefore, bear in mind, that we ought to do a great deal as to normal schools."

TO MISS GURNEY AND MISS BUXTON, AT NORTHREPPS COTTAGE.

"SPITALFIELDS, *June* 10.

"MY DEAR LADIES,—I have received your magnificent packet to-day, and mean to read it with the party to-night. When shall I have Mr Richards' commencement? I spent yesterday at Poles, and very much enjoyed myself, spending hours in the wood. 'Then are they glad because they be quiet.' If we do meet at Rome this winter, we *will* enjoy ourselves. 'We'll never do nothing whatever on earth,' and if that is not pleasure, what is? I am sick of turmoiling."

Mr Buxton spent some months in the neighbourhood of London; incessantly engaged both in communications with the Government, and in endeavouring, with great success, to excite the interest and obtain the co-operation of many

of his friends. In this as in previous undertakings he acted in complete concert with Dr Lushington, with whom every plan was carefully discussed, and who bore his full share of the burden.

At Dr Lushington's house was held a preliminary meeting of a few select friends, before whom Mr Buxton wished in the first instance to lay his views. He writes:—

"We have had a highly satisfactory meeting. I felt that I had my case well up, and was troubled by no worrying doubts. Every one expressed that they were perfectly satisfied upon every point. Lord Ashley was very hearty indeed.

"The line I took about the climate of Africa was this: I stated that my plan was to employ only a few Europeans, and to depend chiefly on the people of colour. I said at once, that I gave up all the mouths of the rivers, and all the swampy ground, and looked only to the high ground at the foot of the Kong Mountains; that I would not pledge myself to the healthiness even of that part, but that I expected that it would prove very different from the general notions of African climate."

This occasion is thus referred to by the Rev. J. M. Trew:—

"The first meeting (preparatory to the formation of the African Civilisation Society), which was strictly private, and at which Mr Buxton made known his plans for prosecuting that great work, was attended by about twenty noblemen and gentlemen. I never shall forget his calm and dignified composure upon that occasion. Before he enunciated a syllable, he seemed to feel as if the destinies of Africa were suspended upon the events of that memorable day. I could not but lift up my heart in silent prayer, that the blessing of the most High God might rest upon his undertaking. And sure I am, that such was the frame of mind in which he ventured upon his work; so humble was he in his address, shewing such ready deference to his friends, such touching sympathy for the objects of his solicitude, so alive to the importance of wisdom in his deliberation and prudence in his plans. Meeting after meeting, private conferences with his more immediate advisers, and public committees of men of all parties in politics, and opposite opinions in religion, only tended to shew how eminently calculated he was for uniting men together on the great platform of benevolence.

"Nor was it only towards his superiors and equals in rank and station that this truly Christian spirit was evinced. All who laboured with him, from the highest to the lowest, could not fail to love him. How often, when worn with toil, and pressed, beyond the powers of his naturally vigorous frame, with the weight of his labours, he has come to town, and visited, as was his custom, almost immediately afterwards, the African Office, notwithstanding that such visits were usually the precursors of enlarged activity; yet there was not a servant in that employment who, during the period of their most

arduous toils, did not feel his kindness, and gather from his beautiful example fresh motives to patient and enduring activity. Hence, a commission to execute, a paper to copy, or a mission to engage in for Sir Fowell, was undertaken with an alacrity which could not fail to manifest their respect and affection for his character. All loved him, honoured him, and hence strove to please him, with an earnestness which is too seldom to be found in the business of life. And when he came amongst them with a brow clouded with care, or internally perhaps labouring under some recent discovery, whereby his great scheme of benevolence was retarded, there was not one amongst the paid servants of the office, over which he presided, who did not sympathise with him. There was, indeed, a calmness and a composure in his spirit in his great trials which rendered him an object of peculiar interest in public life. The mind, whilst it seemed as it were so wrapped up in its own contemplations, had not one complaining reflection, as if this or the other course would have been a more successful one. The bitter and cruel reproaches of some portion of the public press in no way affected him. It was evident that he held a principle within himself upon which to fall back; and, thus staying himself upon the Lord his God, he was enabled to possess his soul in patience, and to rest assured that, in every event, God's providence would finally work for good to the cause of suffering humanity."

The first meeting of the Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade and the Civilisation of Africa was held at the end of July: it proved highly satisfactory. The Bishop of London, Lord Ashley, Sir Robert Inglis, Sir Thomas Acland, and other influential individuals, took an active part. Considerable funds were raised, and, "in short," Mr Buxton writes to Mr Trew,

"It was a glorious meeting, quite an epitome of the state. Whig, Tory, and Radical; Dissenter, Low Church, High Church, tip-top High Church, or Oxfordism, all united. I was unwell, and made a wretched hand of my exposition, but good men and true came to my assistance, and supplied my deficiencies, and no one better than the Bishop of London.

"We determined to form two associations perfectly distinct from each other, but having one common object in view, the putting an end to the slave trade and slavery. One of these associations to be of an exclusively philanthropic character, and designed mainly to diffuse among the African tribes the light of Christianity, and the blessings of civilisation and free labour. The other to have a commercial character, and to unite with the above objects the pursuit of private enterprise and profit."

A few days afterwards, Lord Normanby announced to a deputation, consisting, amongst others, of the Bishop of London, Lords Euston, Worsley, and Teignmouth, Sir T. D. Acland, Sir R. H. Inglis, and Dr Lushington, that the

Government had come to the conclusion to send a frigate and two steamers to explore the Niger, and if possible to set on foot commercial relations with the tribes on its banks. Sir Edward Parry, the comptroller of steam machinery, was appointed to prepare these vessels, and thus began the Niger expedition.

The gratification which this success gave Mr Buxton was soon clouded by private sorrows. His much-loved sister, Sarah Maria Buxton, of Northrepps Cottage, died very suddenly at Clifton, on the 18th of August, 1839. This sister, whose brightness and activity of mind triumphed over the infirmity of very feeble health, was ardently devoted to her brother, and took the liveliest interest in his undertakings.

He thus mentions the event, in a letter to Mr Joseph J. Gurney :—

"It is a vast void to us; she was part of our daily existence; her affection towards me was surpassing the love of women. However, there is exceeding comfort in the reflection that her battle is fought, her pains endured, her labours completed, and that henceforth a crown of glory is provided for her from her bounteous Lord."

It was at first hoped that the Niger expedition might have been fitted out very speedily, but Sir Edward Parry found that it was necessary for the Government to have ships built expressly for the purpose. In the interval, therefore, Mr Buxton had the opportunity of spending the winter at Rome. But it was necessary for him before he left England to prepare a complete edition of his work on "The Slave Trade and its Remedy;" the publication of which had been delayed in order to afford the Government time to deliberate on the plan.

TO A FRIEND.

"NORTHREPPS HALL, *November* 3, 1839.

"I have been working hard during the week, but yesterday we had our hardest day. With the exception of a few minutes in the garden, and a run to the Cottage, and dinner, I did not stop from breakfast till past one o'clock at night; and what is more extraordinary, I had seven capital secretaries at work, and many of them during the whole day. We got on famously; till then I had been very doubtful whether I should not be obliged to stay a week longer."

TO MRS JOHNSTON.

"LONDON, *November* 18.

"My book is finished; there it lies in a bag; a precious tug it has

been to get it done. I do not think I have worked so hard since I left college; day after day, from breakfast till two or three o'clock the next morning, with the interval of only a short walk and meals. I quite wonder at my capacity of exertion.

"The effect of this is that I believe I shall not, when I start to-day, have a single memorandum unattended to, and hardly a letter unwritten."

This exertion was of too severe a character. He writes from Montreuil,—

"*November* 19.

"Since I left London I have spent four hours in sailing, some time in meals, a few minutes in chat and reading, but my great business has been *sleeping*, which I have effected with laudable energy."

CHAPTER XXVI.

1839, 1840.

A FEW months of absolute rest had become essential to the restoration of Mr Buxton's health, and he highly prized his holiday. We shall give some copious extracts from his letters, which are written in a style of playfulness very natural to him when relieved from the pressure of business. But even in his amusements, in his shooting, his eager inquiries into the history of the banditti, and his minute investigation of the state of Roman jails, the same force of character appears which had been displayed in the other parts of his career.

"POSTE ROYALE, MONT CENIS,
Nine o'clock, November 30, 1839.

"For our journey from Lyons to Chambery, and from Chambery to Lanslebourg, I refer you to Fowell's journal, only stating that we were in the carriage, and moving, at a quarter before four in the morning, and out of the carriage at twelve o'clock at night. The last two stages were rather awkward ones to pass in the dark, as we had a continued succession of precipices on one side of the road: on one occasion, on seeing a light straight down, an immense way below us, Anna said, 'There is a star, only in the wrong direction.'

"At Lanslebourg we heard accounts of the roads being very difficult, but still passable and safe; so we gave them their own time and started this morning at half-past nine, with eight horses to our carriage, two to our cart carrying our luggage, and thirteen attendants to bear up the carriage, in case of difficulty from the snow. Things went smooth enough till about one o'clock in the day, when we encountered a '*tourmente*,' as they call it, and, at the same moment, several carts coming from Italy loaded with casks of wine. It was difficult enough to keep the carriage up when we had

all the road to ourselves (for it was snowing so fast that we could scarcely see,) but when, in addition to all this, we had to break out of the way to make room for these caravans, it was by no means agreeable. Our *soundings* of the snow, I should tell you, had not been very flattering; we had, first, a foot deep; after some time, two feet and a half, four feet, five feet; and between five and six feet of snow on the level, was the encouraging report just before we met the wine carts. Well, at this pass, just upon the verge of the top of the mountain, the snow falling, the wind howling, we had this encounter with the caravans; and, first, there was a war of words between the leader of their train and the maître de poste of Lanslebourg, who had volunteered to conduct our expedition. Words ran to the highest pitch, and the shrillest tones, and the most vehement and menacing action seemed to threaten a *charge*, in which the enemy had the safe side, and we the precipice; but, at length, an amicable compact was made between the belligerents, by which the whole force of both parties was employed in hoisting their carts further into the snow on their side. All this, however, had consumed some time, the tornado had then passed, but the accumulation of snow which it had occasioned remained, and here we had our greatest chance of an overturn, but not over the precipice, which was a great way off (full seven feet).

"Over we must have gone, again and again, if it had not been for our little army, half of whom were on one side pulling the carriage towards them; the rest on the other side holding it up. Spink * tells me, that at times the hind wheel was nearly a foot from the top of the snow.

"We had just got through this difficulty, when the men cried out, 'There's a wolf;' and sure enough there sat the beast! This was an almost irresistible bait for us; my gun was loaded after a time (for we had some difficulty in finding the things), but then I recollected that a pretty thing it would be to leave Anna under such circumstances, and go a wolf hunting; so, with a sigh, I was obliged to commit the task to one of our guides, who is a chasseur by profession. He, from ignorance of our guns, got the locks wet and missed fire, and away went the wolf.

"In comes the maître de poste, and tells us that it is in vain to attempt to descend this night. So here we are perched in a little bit of an inn at the top of Mont Cenis; the night very quiet, but hazy, which is a bad business, for last night they killed three foxes, and we might have had famous sport at them to-night; three chasseurs are employed to watch them and give me notice; but, with submission to them, I now conclude my letter and go to bed, only just saying, that though we are on the top of the Alps, we are very comfortable and warm, thanks to roaring fires, admirable trout from a tarn which is close below us, and double windows. . . . . I have just put my nose out, and it is snowing furiously; we have no great taste for a month here with nothing to eat but foxes, but, nevertheless, we are very cheery."

* Miss Gurney's coachman.

The party reached Rome about the 12th December. Mr Buxton thus writes on the 17th :—

"The weather here is delightful; I am now sitting opposite a large window on the shady side of the street, wide open, and it is warmer than any day in England last summer. We hear grand accounts of wild boars and woodcocks. I went to the Capitol yesterday morning. I am old, have never cultivated the fine arts, and all romance has been thumped out of me. One might as well expect to see a hackney coach-horse frisking about like a colt, as to see me in ecstasies and raptures with antiquities and classical recollections. However, I was greatly taken with the view of the whole of Rome. There we saw before us, gathered in a very small space, the city so famous for everything: — at one time, the mistress of the world in arms; at another period, the ruler of nations by the fiat of the Vatican; and, again, the great nursery and school of the arts. You cannot conceive how all the objects of interest are clustered together close around you. Right beneath you, the yellow Tiber; within gun-shot, as it appears, the palace of the Cæsars; but I will not go on describing, or, in spite of myself, I shall grow quite romantic. But one thing did strike me more than all. In a little narrow dark cell, undoubtedly a Roman dungeon, there is a well-grounded tradition that St Paul was confined immediately prior to his martyrdom. What a leaf is this in the history of man! In that palace lived the proud and cruel Cæsar, dreaming of immortal reputation. He is almost forgotten; while the prisoner, who lay in the dungeon loaded with chains; despised and detested, is still remembered. We daily read his works, and ten thousand copies of the history of his life are published every day!

"To-day I visited the Coliseum, the Flavian Amphitheatre. It wonderfully revives and brings to life their ancient spectacles, — it is immense; one can quite understand that a hundred thousand people could have a perfect view of the whole spectacle. The building in its substantial parts is perfect. What an enlightened people to be capable of erecting such an edifice; and what a set of ruthless savages to take delight in seeing poor captives there slaughtering each other, or torn to pieces by wild beasts! I have been interested beyond what I could have conceived possible, by these two spectacles, and quite vexed that I bring with me so slender a stock of classical lore.

"But now for business. I was more gratified than you could guess at hearing of your Spitalfields' school; that is better than Laocoons and amphitheatres. I will subscribe what you ask with pleasure, and ten times more when you tell me it is wanted.

"An officer of justice called here this morning with a huge paper in columns, in which I was to describe myself in all possible ways, and concluding with the question, Why did I come to Rome? I desired Richards to insert, under this head, this—

> 'If the truth I must tell, I came here in the hope,
> Of curing my wife and converting the Pope.'

But I find that the Pope wants no conversion: he has issued a few days ago a capital bull, hurling the Vatican thunders in excellent

style on the heads of all dealers in human flesh. The Portuguese minister here is in a fine fury; but the Pope having got into the scrape, excuses himself from the charge of being actuated by the English, by employing the Propaganda Society to send his bull to all the bishops and ecclesiastical authorities, in Cuba, Brazil, &c. I am mightily pleased with this affair. Pray tell it to the committee when they meet.

"Pleased as I am with the conduct of his Holiness, I am still more pleased that the steamers are ordered, and to be built, too, under the direction of Sir Edward Parry; this is working to some purpose. Dearest ——'s letter describing the Sunday at their new home was cheering and charming: my love to her and to all who formed that sunshiny picture. I have thought more than once, more than twenty times, 'that godliness with contentment is great gain.'"

"Rome. 44 *Via dei Condotti. December* 24.

"The time for wild boars is not fully arrived, though there were five in the market this morning. You must know that my chief duty here is to escort young ladies to parties, as my wife cannot go; so I have become more fashionable and dandy-like than I have been for the last forty years. On Thursday last, in the performance of this duty, I met Mr Wyvill, an old M.P. friend, who told me he was going to hunt the boar, and invited me to join them, which of course I did. Conceive us then, starting before daylight, Fowell and I inside, and Spink on the box, with three other carriages full, distance about thirty miles, a road good for the first ten, for the next twenty super-execrable; with blocks of granite placed on it by the Romans, and never mended since the days of Julius Cæsar. The journey would have shattered our own carriage to pieces, killed our horses, and broken the heart of the coachman. However, we all arrived about sunset; we brought a sumptuous entertainment with us, and were lodged in the house of a priest, which was clean and comfortable, On our road we passed the beautiful lake and castle of Bracciano, which now belongs to Torlonia, the great Jewish banker at Rome. At five next morning we breakfasted, and immediately mounted a herd of various quadrupeds. Mine was a most raw-boned, lazy, stumbling horse, and my right hand suffered much by the effort to get him along; but after a while, seeing that Spink had a sprightly jackass, I changed with him and got on gloriously. Seven miles of rock and quagmire, and stumps of trees, brought us to our hunting-ground, where we saw congregated our native 'compagnons de chasse.' The leader was Velati, the Roman painter, and a fine fellow. He put us in our places, after first marching us over a fine wooded mountain. This made me reeking hot; but I was soon well cooled, for I was located in a dank sunless valley, the steam from which soon rusted my barrels, and made Spink's hands die away. There I stood for an hour and a half with my rifle in my hand. Spink said to me, 'They tell me these beasts fly out upon you,' and forthwith he produced a case of pistols, but he had no opportunity this time of using them. By sound of bugle we were ordered over the next hill, and such a scene opened upon us!

never saw such a combination of the sublime and the lovely. Our next station was on a jutting rock high up the mountain, the sun in full power, and as hot as with us in July; a valley below us, a high hill (the Monte Sacro) opposite, we ourselves surrounded with myrtle, wild lavender, and arbutus loaded with fruit; and all below and opposite, the same splendid foliage. In the distance Soracte, and to the right the blue Mediterranean.

"The assemblage of the boar hunt at luncheon was most curious; forty dogs of every degree, from the turnspit to the wolf-hound, upwards of seventy native chasseurs with guns in their hands, clad in skins,—and fame is a lying vixen if they do not at odd times do a little in the bandit line; but here we were upon honour. Two foxes, two deer, and six boars were the product of the excursion. I have wild boar enough to stock a butcher's shop; one of the boars was the biggest that has been killed for eight years, weighing 400 lbs. I have the tusks of the second, which are awkward weapons. You will want to know what F. and I did; but I am as modest in relation as valiant in deeds of arms, and so I only say that each of us did as much as any *gentleman* of the party. We started for home by moonlight, my donkey had been usurped, and I bestrode another of no generous breed; go he would not, and we were left behind. Again I changed with Spink, to whom Fortune had given a capital horse, and I soon joined and headed our party. Well was it we regained the party, or we should assuredly have slept in the open field or in the cave of a bandit; for after a time I was seized by a furious cramp, and had to be hauled off my horse, and this delayed us half-an-hour."

"*December* 25.

"Last night I finished the history of our excursion against the boars on Monte Sacro. I am now going to tell you of another district famous in classic lore. On Monday, Prince Borghese Aldobrandini, the Duke Roviero, Aubin, Richards, Charles and I, two dogs, and a chasseur, started precisely at four A.M. for Ostia, the very spot where Æneas pitched his camp, so if you wish to have a description of it, you may turn to Virgil. We travelled about fifteen miles along a very decent road, the Tiber almost always close beside us. At length we came to a lake, 'fontis vada sacra Numici,' on which, we all embarked, each having a boat, and started in exact line up the lake, which was covered with wild-fowl. I think we must have seen at one time at least a thousand upon the wing together. We had to sit in the boats and fire as they came by. The two boats that went near the reeds had plenty of sport, but as I was in the middle, and had but one gun, I did not get many shots, and the position being awkward, and the distances very long, I was not exceedingly destructive. We got, however, upwards of seventy head, and it was something to be shooting wild-fowl within sight of the grove of pines recorded by Virgil, and on the very spot where Nisus and Euryalus perished. Pray read the story in Virgil, book ix., and in Dryden, for the benefit of the ladies. The most curious part of the affair was the test it afforded of the climate. On the 23d of December, I started on the lake, in a wet boat, before sun-

rise, without anything on but my September shooting clothes, and there I sat till three o'clock in the afternoon without moving, no glove on my right hand, and my feet in damp hay; a heavy fog prevailed during part of the morning, and we were often enveloped in thick reeds; but during the whole time I had not a sensation of cold, and only suffered from the bite of musquitoes.

"To-day I have been, for the first time, at St Peter's, and seen high mass performed by the Pope himself. But to tell you the truth, I and my scribe are very sleepy; therefore, instead of attempting to give you a notion of the wonderful grandeur of the building, or the splendour of the ceremonies, I shall confine myself to saying that, as a show, it was pre-eminently grand; as a service, there was

'Devotion's every grace, except the heart.'

For ornament, for the display of wealth, for music, for, in short, *a scene*, fifty to one on St Peter's Cathedral against the Friends' Meeting at Plaistow; for religion, for worship in spirit and in truth, fifty to one on Plaistow Meeting against St Peter's and all its glories!"

It has been mentioned that on quitting England Mr Buxton had completed his work on the slave trade, and had left it to be printed. When, however, proof copy was prepared, it was found by those who were superintending the publication that very considerable alterations in the arrangement were expedient. On this being communicated to him, he replies:—

"*December* 26, 1839.

"I wrote last night a ranting letter about wild boars and Nisus and Euryalus, as if these were the only things deserving attention; but your letter of December 11, received to-day, has brought me to my senses, and I am as much in the book as the day I left Northrepps. . . . .

"In truth I give you at once the warmest thanks, and the most hearty approval of these very untoward suggestions. In fact, the more I have thought of it, the more I have assented, nay, have thought it indispensable, and loathe the higgledy-piggledy fashion in which I had tossed my points together. . . . . Idleness would have said, sit still; nervousness the same; you might naturally have felt, 'I know you to be a hard man, apt to be indignant at those who offer advice, take that is thine own, and a pretty hash it will be!'"

TO E. N. BUXTON, ESQ.

"ROME, *January* 1, 1840.

". . . . The tramontane, or northern wind, has come down upon us and has cooled us; nevertheless, we spent three hours yesterday most pleasantly, in walking together about the grounds of the Villa Albani; as many the day before on the Palatine Hill. It is wonderful what a deal there is to see in this city. . . . . But in all their finery there is dirt, and, on the other hand, in the midst of their dirt, there is some remnant of magnificence. You will see a palace

and a pigstye close together; and, moreover, the pigstye will have a small touch of the palace, and the palace a large touch of the pigstye. Nothing, however, can exceed the beauty and luxuriance of the villas round about Rome. I only wish you had seen the deep blue sky over the Albani villa; the residences of Cicero and Horace before us; the hills, some of them covered with snow; and a profusion of roses and oranges growing in the gardens around."

TO JOSEPH J. GURNEY, ESQ. "*January* 6, 1840.

"How passing strange it is, that I should write from Rome, addressing you in Barbadoes. I wish we could change places for a few days. Neither St Peter's, nor the Capitol, nor the dying gladiator, nor Apollo himself, all beautiful as he is, are so interesting to me as would be the sight of the negroes, working for their own benefit, and sheltered by law from the lash of the cart-whip. It is a sight I pant to behold.

"And now as to my worthy self. I have enjoyed both the country and the wonderful works of art in Rome, more than I had any notion that I could. I sometimes laugh at my own romancings, and wonder that such an old, untaught man should give way to such true pleasure, in matters which he does not understand. Rome is, in truth, a wonderful place. There is hardly anything more remarkable than the profusion of its treasures. What Rome must have been in its glory, when the relics are so surprising! . . . .

"Everything bespeaks wonderful intellect on the part of the Romans; but then the base, cruel, cowardly ruffians! Fancy the whole population pouring into the Coliseum, to see the poor captives hew one another to pieces, and finding infinite delight and merriment in such a holiday!"

TO EDWARD N. BUXTON, ESQ.

"*January* 21.

"I picture to myself your arriving at Northrepps on Monday, January 13, and you and your party hugely enjoying yourselves during the week; and I fancy I know precisely where you shot each day, if not the exact number of the slain. I thought you had an especial nice party; but why did Gurney Hoare absent himself? I suppose that Edmund was at the top of the tree. I hope you took decent care of yourselves, age and wisdom being absent, I at Rome, and Sam Hoare at Lombard Street. You may well suppose that I was *un peu fâché* to be absent the first time for more than twenty years from my humble task of attending to the wants and promoting the sport of a rabble of boys. I was resolved, however, to console myself as best I might, and I accomplished this so effectually, that I am ready to back the Pontine Marshes against all Norfolk. On Monday, most of our party embarked, with three dogs, on board a huge monster of a vehicle, and rumbled along to Albano. The next morning, our friend Cresswell, myself, the cacciatore, and our Italian servant Pittini, with three Italian pointers and little Juno, pursued our voyage, leaving the boys and girls behind, and reached Cisterna at ten, where we had fair accommodation, and made friends with another shooting-party, who breakfasted and dined with us.

We shot in the woods, an immense tract of which extends on each side of the road.

"On Thursday morning we passed early through Tre Ponti, the 'Three Taverns' of Scripture, and thence went on, five miles further, to Appii Forum, so called now, and so called in the days of St Paul. I read St Paul's account of his journey: and on the road he traversed, and in view of the very same hills which he saw, (and most remarkable hills they are,) I pictured to myself his friends approaching, 'whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage.'

"We had a letter from the Duke of Braschi, the owner of twenty miles square hereabouts, to his steward, who resides in an immense old building, once the palace of the Braschi; and at an earlier period, a great monastery. The steward was absent, and, alas! the key of the cellar was in his pocket; the servants, however, received us with all civility.

"Our first inquiry was about beds. To look at, they were very well. 'Have they been slept in?' I inquired. 'Oh! yes.' 'Who slept last in my bed?' 'The Duke of Braschi himself.' 'When was the Duke last here?' 'Ten years ago was his last visit.' So my bed, it was quite clear, had not been slept in for ten years! The house was haunted to the last degree; it was quite a preserve of ghosts. But there were more rats than ghosts, more fleas than rats, more musquitoes than fleas, and more musical frogs than any of them. In the morning I saw poor Cresswell; in addition to my musicians, he had had four indefatigable cats, who during the livelong night had serenaded him for admission into his room, where our game was lodged, and over his window was a dovecot, into which the rats were continually making commandos; in short, he had enjoyed such a concord of 'sweet sounds,' as conferred upon him what Milton calls 'a sober certainty of waking bliss.'"

"*February* 3.

"Now prepare your mind for an adventure which occurred to us in our shooting excursion on Saturday, into which good live banditti are introduced, and blows struck, and all the charming accompaniments of daggers and pistols. You will be dying, I am sure, to hear the story, and to learn the return of killed, wounded, and prisoners. But suspend your curiosity, be content with knowing, for the present, that our adventure is to-day the talk of all Rome, and that troops are sent off to the marshes to shoot, not snipes, but robbers; at least I suppose so. But to business first, if you please.

. . . . . .

"Well, now, sleepy as I am, I will tell you our story:—On Saturday morning, Aubin, I, and Spink, in the inside, our cacciatore and the coachman on the box, with our three dogs, started to Macarese after the snipes. You may remember that I told you in a former letter the distance of this marsh, also that we saw in the road the blood of a man who had been murdered the preceding night, and a little cross stuck into the hedge to commemorate the event. About half a mile further on, turning into a gate, we observed another cross, intimating that another murder had been committed since our

last visit; and I hear there is no part of the country where you will find a more choice collection of robbers and assassins than this same Macarese. I took Spink merely to attend me; but he had the wit to borrow a little single-barrelled gun, and as I saw he was bent upon signalising himself, I had not the heart to baulk him. Alas! the waters were down and the snipes were up, and, though we shot capitally, we only managed to get eleven couple. We might have brought home a rare stock of vipers if we had wished it, for we saw about a dozen in a quarter of an hour. When we were going to have luncheon I selected my spot, but little Juno made such a fuss that we looked into it, and saw a viper nearly two feet long. We removed, and out of the bush at our feet went another great banging fellow.

"We lunched, however, and went again at the snipes. At length we started towards home; but an unlucky jack snipe seduced Spink some way back again. He went after it and killed it. No sooner was his gun off, than from a broad, almost impenetrable hedge, which crosses the swamp, out rushed two fellows; the first who arrived snatched his gun, the other seized his collar, gave him a hard kick on his leg, and drew a long knife out of his side-pocket. Could any situation be more forlorn? we out of hearing, his gun discharged, his knees knocking together through terror, his head turning round and round, his heart in his mouth. I use his own expressions, and never did I hear so vivid a description as he gave of the scene,—for he lives to tell it. What did he do in such adversity? Why, exactly the right thing: he let go his gun, put his two hands into his waistcoat pockets, and produced from each a pocket pistol, loaded, capped, and cocked, and presented one at the breast of each robber! The state of affairs was suddenly changed. The heroes, who a moment before jabbered so loud, and kicked so hard, turned tail, dropped the gun, and dashed into the hedge, and Spink remained master of the field of battle. But he did not keep it long. 'I seized the gun,' said he, 'I did not know where I was, nor anything about it; I ran through a pool up to my waist, and never stopped till I fell from fright and want of breath; then I loaded and fired my gun as a signal of distress.' Now I must tell you that we had waited nearly half-an-hour for him, somewhat disconcerted at being detained; and thought it very cool of him to be following his sport while we were kicking our heels. This gave occasion to the cacciatore to exercise the wit, for which he is famed. 'Why the man must have got a charm, he has had more shots than all of us put together, he must hereafter be called The Fortunate Youth.' Little did we dream that the poor fellow was then in the extremity of distress, hardly able to move, and not knowing whether his road lay to the right or to the left. But upon hearing another gun fired by him, it occurred to me that he might be making signals, so having fired our guns, which singularly enough he never heard, (probably he was lying down in a kind of swoon from over-exertion,) I began to halloo as loud as ever I could, and at length he heard me, and was cheered by the sound of my voice, and came running after us.

"When he arrived near me, I was beginning an oration to apprise

him how we had been all kept waiting; when, on looking into his face I saw him pale as ashes, and looking most strange and bewildered. I immediately gave him some brandy, told him to compose himself, and at length we heard the history of his adventures.

"His extreme satisfaction that he had not shot the two men, which if they had persisted a moment longer he certainly would have done; his most natural and graphic description of his exquisite terror; his conviction that neither he nor his mistress would ever have been happy again if the blood of these men had been upon his hands; his deep detestation of snipe-shooting, marshes, Rome, and Romans; his solemn resolution never to quit my side if he had the misfortune again to go a shooting; his vivid apprehensions, and most anxious inquiries whether we thought there was a chance of our getting back again to Rome without encountering a fresh gang of banditti—these beguiled our way home.

"Everybody approves the course he took; and it seems likely to be the fashion for every one, in imitation of him, to carry pistols in their waistcoat pockets when they go out shooting. I ought to have told you that, probably, these fellows had been watching us all day. I saw one creeping along on the other side of the hedge some time before, and if I could have spoken Italian, should have tempted him to assume the place of my attendant which Spink had relinquished. Well, there ends my story. I wish you could have heard him tell what he felt when these hideous fellows rushed out, and when the knife met his eyes. It was, as he told the story, not only very tragical, but irresistibly comical. To do him justice, however, I am right glad that the accident befel him and not me. I am afraid if I had had a pair of pistols in my hand, under such circumstances, in such a fright, I should have had to bear upon my nerves a sense of two human beings plunged into a most awful eternity. But, good night. Rome is affluent in robbers, we hear of a robbery or murder every day, and a gang has taken post they say in a wood twelve miles off." *

TO SAMUEL HOARE, ESQ.

"*January* 28.

"Of one thing assure yourself, my visit to Rome has not tended to make me a Roman Catholic. This city has as many fountains and as much dirt, as many priests and as much wickedness, as any in the world. Not, however, but that there is a great deal to admire here. The spirit and stimulus with which they urge forward their religion, is well worthy the imitation of Protestants. I was yesterday with Father Glover, one of the five who rule the Jesuits, and he told me that their Propaganda Society for Missions gets £40,000 a year.

"Their mode of proceeding is this: one man engages to collect the subscription, amounting to a halfpenny per week, from ten persons; another, of a higher order, collects ten of these first, and so on; so that, in substance, the last person is answerable for the subscriptions of a thousand. Their plan, also, of missions, is admirable; their missionaries in every country are instructed to look out for

* This gang, a few days afterwards, robbed Don Miguel, the ex-king of Portugal, as he was returning from a shooting excursion.

young men of talent and zeal, and likely to make good missionaries. These they import to Rome, and give them, in their Propaganda College, a first-rate education. They detain them there, if upon their first coming they understand the rudiments of Latin, &c., seven years, otherwise twelve, and then send them back as missionaries to the country from which they were taken. In this way, they have here at present under education, 130 young men from all parts of the world, and recently discourses were delivered by them in forty-three different languages; and they seem a body of very intelligent and well-educated youths.

"No wonder, then, that their religion spreads as it seems to be doing. In 1825, they had but thirteen Roman Catholics in Guiana, and now there are 5000! When the United States separated from Great Britain, they had one bishop, twenty priests, and a small Roman Catholic population. They have now 1,500,000 Roman Catholics! Surely these facts, which I collected from the head of the Jesuits, are both stimulating and instructive.

"But now for another matter, on which I am really distressed for the want of your assistance. You advise me to visit the prisons. The fact is, I have been doing so. I thought it a shame for an old *prison fancier* to be here with so much to be seen in this way, and not to devote some portion of his leisure to it. I therefore made a formal application to the Cardinal Minister, and almost immediately I received, to the astonishment of both Romans and English, a full permission to visit all the gaols, with the offer of every species of information; also all the hospitals, and all the places for education. To the two last, the Cardinal offered to accompany me; but, as yet, I have not been to them, and it is very likely I shall not have time, but a party of us have gone the round of the prisons within Rome. To-morrow, I visit the prison hospitals; and on Friday next, I go to two large outlying gaols. I shall then have completed this part of my work, as far as Rome is concerned. There are some large prisons at a distance within the Papal dominions, and these I shall endeavour to see.

"The subject has attracted some attention. The Romans are mightily taken with it, and look upon the permission given to me, as an unheard-of instance of liberality on the part of their Sovereign, and beg that I will avail myself of the opportunity and speak out. Three English noblemen have been amongst the number of my companions, and they are engaged to go with me on Friday. I was yesterday taken by one of them to Lord Shrewsbury, who tells me that Prince Borghese is inclined to establish a Prison Discipline Society. This is what I am at now.

"The state of the prisons is substantially this: they are very clean, (to be sure they knew we were coming, and it must be remembered throughout, that we were never able to take them by surprise,) the rooms are very lofty, and the air always fresh and good; the provisions good in quality, and, I should think, sufficient. But one of the questions which I especially want you to give me an answer upon is, what, in addition to a ladleful of weak meat soup—being in quantity, I should imagine, abut three-quarters of a pint, ought to

be the allowance of bread for a prisoner, not in solitude and not employed!

"I now come to the defects. There is no such thing as classification, except, indeed, an attempt upon a small scale with regard to boys. Male prisoners of all ages and for all crimes, from common assault to murder, are congregated together. In one instance, there were 200 in one spacious room. There is no inspection whatsoever. There is no work for the great majority. The felons convicted and sentenced for long periods are worked in the public streets; but the remainder, tried and untried, (and they amount to several hundreds,) have nothing whatever to do. There is no regular gaol-delivery; so that we met with several persons who had been detained before trial for upwards of a year. There is no school; and, with the exception of mass on the Sunday, and the repetition of a creed at nightfall, there is little effort made to convey religious instruction. These, I think, are the leading particulars. I should have said, however, that there are no chains, except for persons convicted of infamous crimes, (answering to our felonies,) and that there is neither the solitary nor the silent system.

"Now, then, I want you and Crawford to tell me what I should urge upon the Government. They have plenty of space about their gaols, so that there is room enough within the walls for any improvement; but the Government is poor.

"I find myself considerably at a loss from my inability to revive my old prison discipline lore. I am doing my best to get a book, (which I think I once read;) it was written in the earlier stages of the prison discipline question, and is called, if I recollect right, 'Buxton on Prison Discipline.' If I get this, it will be something; but I look far more to an immediate communication from you and Crawford.

"Neri, who I understand bears the title of Chancellor, and is a very intelligent man, accompanied me through all the gaols, and has earnestly asked me to apply, both to our Government and your society, for any documents, plans, &c., which might be useful to a Government desiring to improve its prisons. So, if you please, you must get me what your society can furnish, and Crawford must apply to the Marquis of Normanby, who will, I am sure, cheerfully lend his assistance in such a cause.

"Executions are rare, especially considering that murders are so plentiful. They told me that there were only two or three in a year. I ought to add, that books are not allowed to the prisoners, except by special permission. We saw, I think, but four or five in all the gaols."

TO MRS JOHNSTON.

"*Januarg* 31, 1840.

"I must tell you about the dinner party at Lord Shrewsbury's yesterday. . . . . I had scarcely entered the room before a Monsignor seized my hand and affected to kiss it; this was the Governor of Rome, who had given us the order of admission into all the prisons, hospitals, &c. He and I had a very interesting conversation, and as long a one as could well be expected, considering that he understood but two words of English, and I about three

of Italian. Oh! this plague of languages! Next came up Prince Borghese, a very pleasing young man, who spoke a little English, and before whom I threw the proposal that he should become the chairman of a Prison Discipline Association. I was afterwards introduced to the Duc de Bordeaux, with whom I had some conversation on the slave trade, and who expressed a wish to see my book. He also said mighty civil things. Poor fellow! he has a sweet expression of countenance; conceive Mrs ——, with the same expression, and the same extreme clearness and cleanliness of skin, but with broader features and a stouter person, and a heavier eye, and you have a good picture of the man.

"The Pretender's course is not a smooth one. If he has either extreme of character he may do well. Let him be excessively quiet, devoid of ambition and enterprise, that may do. Or let him be clever, daring, sagacious, ambitious, and commanding, and that, perhaps, will do. But, if there is any mixture in his composition, — if the least dash of adventure is coupled with his love of ease, or the least love of peace is mingled with his ambition, he will assuredly be a martyr. One cannot see the Duke without liking him, and wishing that he may have the good sense to steer clear of turbulent politics.

"At dinner I sat next to Lady Shrewsbury's sister, who told me everything about everybody. Among the rest, that that beautiful refined creature, the Princess Doria, actually goes every day in the Holy Week to wash the feet of the patients in the hospital. Well! well! good people may abhor the Roman Catholics if they please, and may feel, as I do, that they are led dangerously astray in their doctrines, but I never will join in setting them down as creatures devoid of deep feelings of religion, nor can I deny that there is humility and self-denial in such an act as I have described.

"On Tuesday, after seeing the San Michele, I went with Lord Meath, Lord De Mauley, and Richards, to the church of San Augustino. The panels adjacent to the altar were covered with knives and pistols, which had been presented by robbers and murderers to the Virgin. I suppose you have heard of Spink's adventure; it made us look upon the knives with something more of interest. On Wednesday we went to the Corsini Palace: there are two *such* pictures there of Christ, with a crown of thorns; the one, the *Ecce Homo* of Guercino, the other, in some respects still more touching, by Carlo Dolce. There was also the exquisite picture of the Virgin and Child, by Murillo. I longed to steal it. Yesterday we saw a splendid collection at the Borghese Palace, and then we had a long conversation with a Jesuit. I am very anxious to make myself master of their system of missions and of that of the Lyons Society. They seem to effect so much, with means so limited; besides, I am persuaded they are upon the right principle. Their whole fight is for *native* missionaries. Their first act is to establish schools, in which, however, the instruction of the people is a very secondary object; the main purpose being to get a number of children, so far educated that they may pick out a few fitted by talent, disposition, and ready reception of Christianity, to be sent to Rome to receive a thorough education. Here they detain them, in some cases for

seven, in others for twelve years, and send them back, well instructed as missionaries, to their own country.

"Now I must tell you that the Jesuits and I are playing a game of chess. They hope, I fancy, from my willingness to listen, from my eagerness to learn, from my ready laudation of all that I find reason to approve, that they will make me a convert to Popery. I, on the other hand, wish to make myself master of the secrets of the system which has rendered the Jesuit missions so eminently successful; and I tell them without reserve that this is my object. Nevertheless, they are vastly communicative.

"I was adverse to the Catholic religion when I left England, because I saw the error of their doctrines; but now, when I see in their practice the fruit of their system, and the depravity of the people that are so taught, I am still more Protestant than ever, if it be possible. To do them justice, preaching Christ is part of their practice, but the divine powers of our Saviour are shared with the Virgin Mary, and she takes not only the mother's, but the lion's portion. Then their system of religion seems to be destitute of spirituality. Moreover, they seem to teach scarcely any morality. I found my wife yesterday announcing to our Italian maid the *novel* intelligence of the Ten Commandments. This girl had had an education, but apparently not a very profound one; for according, as she said, to the practice of Rome, she had only remained at school one week, in order to learn how to say mass.

"I have just been looking out of the window at the rain, the like of which I never saw, except at our pic-nic at Beckham, when, as some one described it, 'the drops were as thick as hail, and every drop a pailful.' Collier (the Jesuit) told us of a speech of a priest in Maranham against slavery, of so powerful a nature that after it the whole congregation liberated their slaves; and he said that priests in slave colonies had been the natural and enthusiastic protectors of the negroes. He also used or quoted a sentence which just hit the mark in my mind. Speaking of some one he said, 'He is of the body of the church, but not of its soul.'"

TO SAMUEL HOARE, ESQ.

"ROME, *March* 3.

"I have had occasion to remember the excursion to the prison at St Albans which you and I took long ago, when, on Monday morning, Richards and I were trotting along in a diligence to Civita Vecchia. The gaol there, which was the object of our journey, is an old and strong fortress close by the sea, and contains 1364 desperate-looking criminals, all for the most aggravated offences. I am sure you never saw such a gang of malefactors, or such a horrid dungeon. We went, first, into a vaulted room, with a low ceiling, as I measured it, thirty-one yards long, twenty-one broad. There was light, but obscure. A good deal of the room was taken up by the buttresses which supported the arches. The noise on our entrance was such as may be imagined at the entrance of hell itself. All were chained most heavily, and fastened down. The murderers and desperate bandits are fixed to that spot for the rest of their lives; they are chained to

a ring, fastened to the end of the platform, on which they lie side by side, but they can move the length of their chain on a narrow gangway. Of this class, there were upwards of 700 in the prison; some of them famed for a multitude of murders; many, we are told, had committed six or seven; and, indeed, they were a ghastly crew, — haggard, ferocious, reckless assassins. I do not think that the attendant jailer very much liked our being there. A sergeant, in uniform, was ordered to keep close by me; and I observed that he kept his hand upon his sword, as we walked up the alley between the adjacent platforms.

"There was a fourth room at some distance, and our guide employed many expedients to divert us from going there .... This was worse than any of the others: the room lower, damper, darker, and the prisoners with, if possible, a more murderous look. .... The mayor afterwards told us, that he in his official capacity knew that there was a murder every month among the prisoners. I spoke to a good many of them, and, with one exception, each said that he was condemned for murder or stabbing. I will tell you one short conversation. 'What are you here for?' said I to a heavy-looking fellow, lying on his back at the end of the room. He made no answer; but a prisoner near him, with the sharp features and dark complexion of an Italian, promptly said, 'He is here for stabbing,' (giving a thrust with his hand to show how it was done.) 'And why is he in this part of the prison?' 'Because he is incorrigible.' 'And what were you condemned for?' 'For murder.' 'And why placed here?' '*Sono incorrigible.*' .... In short, this prison combines together, in excess, all the evils of which prisons are capable. It is, as the mayor said, a sink of all the iniquity of the state. The Capuchins certainly preach them a sermon on the Sunday, and afford them an opportunity of confession; of which, if the prisoners avail themselves, the priests must have enough to do. The sight of it has kindled in my mind a very strong desire, that the old Prison Discipline Society should make a great effort, and visit all the prisons of the world. I had hoped that sound principles of prison discipline had spread themselves more widely; but I now fear that there are places, and many of them, in the world, in which it is horrible that human beings should live, and still more horrible that they should die."

"*March* 4.

"Having in yesterday's letter given you a heavy and dreary account of the prisons here, I must now furnish you with a history of some of their inmates. In the citadel of Civita Vecchia, Gasparoni and his gang are confined, and have been so for the last fourteen years. There are many renowned robbers in this country, but none so celebrated as this Gasparoni; and I had the honour of an interview of two hours with him and his band. He is a very fine-looking fellow, about five feet eleven high, with as strong and *brick-wall* an arm as ever I felt, except, perhaps, General Turner's; he wore an old velvet coat, which had seen service with him, and a large peaked hat. There was nothing ferocious in the expression of his countenance. I am going to have his picture taken, a compliment

which his appearance well deserves; for he is the *beau-idéal* of a Robin Hood or Rob Roy. By his side there was a fiendish-looking wretch, who plagued us with his interruptions. This fellow is said to have joined the band chiefly from his love of human blood, and his post was that of executioner.

"Gasparoni was very communicative; only that either from the modesty which belongs to great men, or some latent hope of pardon, he greatly underrates his own exploits. For example, to my question, 'How many people have you murdered?' he replied, 'I cannot exactly recollect, somewhere about sixty!' whereas it is notorious that he has slaughtered at least double the number. Indeed, the mayor of Civita Vecchia assured me, that he had received authentic information of two hundred; but he believed that even that number was still below the mark. This man, according to his own account, when he was but a young lad, killed a person in a quarrel and fled to the mountains, where he was joined by a few young men of similar character. Before he was twenty years old he had committed ten murders, and was at the head of a band of fifteen or twenty robbers, which afterwards amounted to about thirty of his own bodyguard; but there were two or three other bands under separate commanders, one of whom was his brother; he, however, was lord paramount.

"It is incontestable that he kept a district of country of at least one hundred miles in circumference, between Rome and Naples, in the utmost terror and subjection. Those proprietors who were not slain by him, fled the country, and were obliged to receive such a modicum of rent, as the tenants who compounded with Gasparoni chose to pay; but the black mail which he levied was not extravagant. The Government at first offered two hundred crowns for his head. This mounted up at last to three thousand crowns, and that was the fixed price for many years, and a thousand soldiers were regularly employed in hunting him. 'But how then,' said I, 'did you escape?' 'That you will never understand,' he replied, 'till you see the rocks and precipices that are there. I and my men knew every turn; we have often been close to the soldiers, and let them pass us, when they had no notion they had such near neighbours.' Gasparoni had many conflicts with the military, in which he was uniformly successful; but in one affair he received a ball in the lower part of his neck, the scar of which he shewed us. He described one conflict, in which, with ten or twelve of his men, he beat off, as he said, thirty soldiers; but the ill-looking scoundrel by his side said there were full sixty.

"Gasparoni's headquarters were at Sonnino, where his wife and children resided, and where the whole population were devoted to him. This town had obtained so evil a reputation, that on his surrender the Pope made a great effort to get it razed to the ground, but could not get the assent of the proprietor. I was interested by learning from him that the haunts he chiefly occupied for the purpose of observing the road, were the three little towns perched on the rock, and shining like silver, Cora, Norma, and Sermoneta, which had so much attracted my admiration when I was at Appii

Forum. He told me that he had spent a large proportion of his plunder upon spies at Rome, by whom he was made acquainted with the plans designed for his capture, and who also told him what persons coming along the road were worth catching; if emissaries were sent for the purpose of entrapping him, he was forewarned, and the vengeance he took on them was terrible. He crucified one of these men, and wrote underneath, 'Thus Gasparoni treats all spies.' He cut out the heart and liver of another, and sent them back to the man's widow.

"If any persons in the towns were active against him, he always found means to punish them. If their offence was not very deep, they received a letter ordering them to pay, on a certain day, at a certain place, one thousand or two thousand scudi; and such was the terror of his name, that these demands were generally obeyed. Some of the magistrates in the strong town of Terracina, thinking themselves secure within their walls, ventured to incur his displeasure. Soon after, the boys of the chief school, while taking a walk near the gates, were surprised by him and his men, and carried away to the mountains; and a message was sent to the parents of almost all, fixing the amount of ransom, upon the payment of which they were restored. But the children of those who had exasperated him were not allowed to escape; their heads were sent back in a sack. Of the truth of this dreadful story there can be no doubt. A friend of mine asked Gasparoni about it; he admitted that he had seized the children, but said nothing about the murders. The gentleman said to him, 'I have heard more than this; I have been told you cut off the heads of three of them.' 'It is false,' said Gasparoni; 'it was but two.'

"Mr Jones, the banker here, told me that last October he saw a man who had been one of this party of boys, and who described to him the whole scene of their capture, and of their residence in a cavern among the mountains. This man actually saw Gasparoni plunge his knife into the body of his two victims. Mr Jones also told us that he had travelled through the country where Gasparoni and his men used to hide themselves; but such was still the terror of his name, and the painful associations connected with it, that he could not get respectable persons to speak on the subject, nor could he prevail upon any one to be his guide to their cavern. The person, who, when a boy, had been carried to the mountains, was the most communicative. As Mr Jones was walking with him on a little terrace adjacent to the walls of Terracina, he stopped at the corner of a wall, and said, 'Such a one, an officer of the town, had rambled thus far at mid-day; Gasparoni, sprang out of that hedge, struck him with his knife, and here he fell dead.'

"You must know that Gasparoni, according to his own account, was especially merciful. He protested that he had never murdered merely from the love of blood; but he seemed to think there was no harm in killing, and admitted that he had killed many who came as spies to entrap him, or who presumed to make resistance. Rumour says, however, that he was by no means so squeamish. A friend of mine came up to a diligence which had just been plundered, and

found that the whole party, including several priests, had all been wounded, although none of them mortally. They said that the first intimation they had of their danger was a volley from the whole gang, and my friend took out of the lining of the carriage a whole handful of shot of all sizes.

"It is odd enough that Gasparoni is very religious now; he fasts not only on Friday, but adds a supererogatory Saturday. He told me that he repented of his former life; but what it was he regretted I could not well make out, for he expressly justified the occasions on which he had proceeded to extremities with spies or travellers who resisted him. But, curious as his theology now is, it is still more strange that, according to his own account, he was always a very religious man. I asked him whether he had fasted when he was a bandit. He said 'Yes.' 'Why did you fast?' said I. '*Perche sono della religione della Madonna.*' 'Which did you think was worst, eating meat on a Friday or killing a man?' He answered without hesitation, 'In my case it was a crime not to fast, it was no crime to kill those who came to betray me.' With all his present religion, however, he told the mayor of the town the other day, that if he got loose the first thing he would do would be to cut the throats of all the priests; and the mayor said in this he perfectly believed him, and if he were now to break out he would be ten times worse than ever. One fact, however, shews some degree of scrupulosity. The people of the country bear testimony that he never committed murder on a Friday!

"The mayor said the only good thing he ever knew him really do, was this: he took an Austrian officer and his newly married bride and carried them up to the hills. His gang stripped her of all her clothes and proposed to kill her, but this he resisted, and ultimately sent her and her husband back in safety. It is some deduction from his humanity on this occasion to hear, as I did from another quarter, that the Austrian general, hearing of the capture, sent word to Gasparoni that if any injury was done to his officer, or if he was not directly restored, he would send four thousand men against him, who should be quartered in the village, and on his friends, till he should be taken.

"Gasparoni told me that he had never taken an Englishman to the mountains. I asked him why, rather expecting that he would reply with some gross flummery, but he answered very simply, 'Because I never had the luck to catch one!' He assured me that he had not in all taken above fifteen or twenty persons to the hills; but the current report makes the number upwards of two hundred. From these he was inexorable in extorting the precise sum that he fixed upon as their ransom. It is well known that he obtained from a Neapolitan nobleman, who is still living, 4000 scudi. The mayor told me that an intimate friend of his was captured by him, and the sum demanded was his weight in silver; his friends being unable to pay this, at the end of a fortnight received his head neatly packed up in a basket! All, however, who did return, bear testimony to their good fare, and to his good humour; and his courtly and somewhat delicate conduct, while they were his guests in the cavern.

"One incident which was related to me is in part attested by many living witnesses. A wedding was celebrated in a part of the country at some distance from his haunt. When dinner was placed on the table, a man, fully armed, but unknown to the guests, stalked in, and seated himself by the side of the bride, with a kind of trumpet between his knees. The guests, somewhat startled, shewed little disposition to eat; and the bridegroom told the intruder that 'it was not usual for a stranger to take the post he occupied.' He replied, 'I am no stranger, I am Gasparoni. I am a friend to the bride; eat, and be at your ease, or you will make me her enemy.' It is said his terrible name rather quenched the merriment and appetite of the party. At length Gasparoni sounded his horn; two troops came rushing down the hill, and seized the bride, Gasparoni saying, 'I told you I was her friend, and I shew it by taking her away with me.' It would be well if the story stopped here, but it is said that she was afterwards murdered.

"You will wish to know how he was taken. He became such a nuisance, that partly from the strength of the military parties, which were constantly sent in pursuit of him, and partly from the diminution of traffic on the road, his funds became short, and he could not pay his spies. The Government then took the decisive measure of seizing all his relations and friends, and those who supplied him with food and ammunition; in other words, the whole population of Sonnino. Without money, and half-starved, unable to obtain intelligence, and surrounded on all sides by troops, he was on the point of being captured, when he listened to the proposals of a priest, who, as it is said, went beyond the authority given him, and offered him a full pardon and a pension; upon which he and his comrades surrendered; and hence it was that I had the opportunity of seeing him, surrounded by twenty-one ruffians, the remainder of his band. I asked him which of them was the man he chiefly trusted; in other words, who was his lieutenant; he answered, 'My gun was my only lieutenant; *that* never failed to obey me.'

"He complains loudly of the violation of the promise made to him, and still seems to dream of being liberated. He was the son of a herdsman, and cannot read or write; but his little demon-like executioner, who stood by his side, is said to be a tolerable scholar. He amuses himself by making caps, of which I bought three. I have hardly done justice to his appearance: he is greatly superior in this respect to those around him. He has the air of a chieftain, and, though his look is very commanding, there is something far from unpleasing in his face; it is decidedly handsome in features, but the expression also is gentle and intellectual. While speaking with me he looked me full in the face the whole time. I told him that I intended to have his likeness taken for a particular purpose, of which you shall know more another time. He said he had no objection. I told him that the painter would not be able to come for some time. 'No matter,' said he, 'let him suit himself, he will always find me at home.'

"It is quite astonishing how much terror was attached to his name. One proof of its surviving, even to this time, I witnessed

when I was shooting at Appii Forum; for at the distance of every three or four miles on the road there were military stations or huts, in some of which they still keep soldiers.

"By this time, I think, you must be pretty sick of robber stories. But I must inflict on you one more.

"An Englishman arrived here this year, who could scarcely speak a word of Italian. He heard, of course, not a little about assassins, robbers, and such like, and prudently resolved never to go alone, and never to be out after dusk. Both these resolutions were fated to fail. He dined with a friend near Rome, and was obliged to walk home alone the same night; this looked terrific before dinner: but a few glasses of Marsala, and a few more of Champagne, braced up his courage, and away he started, about ten o'clock. As he walked briskly along in the darkness, he came full butt against a man. He was startled, and the tales he had heard recurred to his recollection; but the man passed on, and in a short time our hero felt for his watch, and found that it was gone. Then the good wine came into play: he rushed back, seized the rascal, and vehemently demanded 'Montre! Montre!' The robber trembled, and reluctantly yielded up the watch.

"On reaching home he recounted, with no little exultation, his heroic exploit, and vowed that, if the rest of the world would behave as he had done, robbery would cease in Rome in a fortnight. When he had finished his oration, his sister said, 'All this is very strange; for after you went out I saw your watch hanging in your room, and there it is now.' Sure enough there it was. So it appeared, past all dispute, that, instead of being robbed, he had himself committed a robbery!"

TO EDWARD N. BUXTON, ESQ.

"*March* 9.

"I do not recollect that I ever read a paper which gave me more thorough satisfaction than Lord John's letter about the slave trade.

"The project of overturning the slave trade by civilisation, Christianity, and the cultivation of the soil, is no longer in my hands: the Government have adopted the principle, and taken the task upon themselves; and if it fail for want of energetic working, they are to blame. In short, I feel much more a gentleman at large than I did before I read that letter.

"To-day I have been in the house of the heir of the Cæsars and the successor of St Peter. The Pope is a civil, lively little gentleman. Our party consisted of the Hanoverian Ambassador, Baron Kestner; a Danish Count just returned from the Holy Land; an English officer; Richards, in Kestner's court dress; Fowell, Charles, and myself. He gave us an audience of upwards of three quarters of an hour.

"He was very inquisitive to know what I thought of the Roman prisons. Kestner (who understands neither English nor Italian) interpreted for us, and I heard him say for me rather more than I liked, of '*contentissimo*.' This was not exactly what I wanted to express; so I referred to Richards, and desired him to speak for me.

I praised everything I could think of, which deserved commendation; such as the Chancellor of the Jails (Signor Neri), the Boys' Prison, the San Michele Hospital, and the liberality of the Government in giving me free access and full information; to all of which he very gracefully replied, that if gentlemen from motives of benevolence took the trouble to visit their institutions, the least he could do was to afford facilities, furnish documents, and listen attentively to every suggestion.

"Well, having praised wherever I could, I gently intimated that the Roman gaols, in general, wanted a good deal of purification; and that I felt bound in honesty to tell him that two, namely, the female prison of San Michele, and the great gaol of Civita Vecchia, were to the last degree bad; and called aloud on those who are influenced, whether by policy, humanity, or religion, for a thorough reformation. To all this he seemed very attentive and well disposed. We then had a long conversation about the slave trade and slavery. He seemed not a little proud of what he had done, and I told him of the satisfaction which his bull had given in England, on the score of the slave trade, at which it was pointed; and also with reference to slavery and the mal-treatment of aborigines, which it indirectly hit. He called the slave trade an infamous traffic, said that charity was the soul of religion, and that, whilst forbidding all cruelty, it expressly prohibited that which was inflicted on the human race; and he concluded with saying, and laughing loud at his own speech, 'Thanks to me, if you please: but no thanks to Portugal.' In short, he expressed himself capitally. Having disposed of my own two pets, prisons and slave trade, I felt constrained to put in a word relative to some atrociously cruel practices here, in the treatment of lambs by the butchers. He hardly seemed ripe for this; but Richards stuck to it manfully: and the matter ended by my giving him A——'s paper on the subject, and his promising to give it his best consideration.*

"Thus, very amicably, ended our interview."

"*March* 19.

"I have been employed of late in preparing my report about the prisons for the Pope, and in having it translated into Italian. To-morrow morning, Lord Meath, Lord De Mauley, and two or three others, meet here to have it read to them, and I hope to get it completed and presented before I go to Naples.

"Trew tells me that the book is published; and I have seen it advertised in the newspapers. If you wish to know what feeling in our minds this intelligence has called forth, turn to the 90th Psalm, 17th verse, Prayer-Book version.† If it were not that we have good

* Some months afterwards, Mr Buxton heard that his representations on this subject had been attended to. He wrote to Miss Gurney, through whom the news reached him, "I must thank you for your letter about the Pope and the lambs; it really was an achievement. I never see one galloping about a field now, without thinking of the benefactress of lambs. What a thing it is to have rescued such a multitude from torture! I do believe there is much good in Pope Gregory, after all; it is capital when great people will respond to good advice."

† "Prosper thou the work of our hands upon us, O prosper thou our handywork."

reason for assuring ourselves of His aid who can make all things bend to His will, we should think any hope for Africa, after so many centuries of such deep debasement, chimerical in the last degree. As it is, we are in right good heart, and feel that, however the instruments may err or fail, the great Actor and Leader will give the victory to His own work."

TO EDWARD N. BUXTON, ESQ.

"MOLA DI GAETA, one day's journey from Naples,
April 10, 1840.

"I wrote to you last on the 1st of April, in the worst of my illness. We left Rome as soon as I was able to move. I suffered not a little from exhaustion in going up stairs at Albano, but I have been improving ever since, and am now nearly as well as ever. . . . .

"My illness alone has prevented us from paying a visit to Sonnino, the town of robbers. As you enter it, I am told, you see the prison ornamented with fourteen cages, containing the heads of so many bandits; if you go into the streets and speak to three men, the chance is that one out of the number has been upon the hills, and that two out of the three are of the lineage of some predatory hero. It is, however, not easy to get at information; the Government cannot bear the subject to be mentioned; the guilty, therefore, who have been conditionally pardoned, dare not speak, and the others who were their prey, have too many painful associations to make the subject agreeable. Two Englishmen who have travelled there tell me that if you ask a question of any respectable person on these dark transactions, he usually utters not a word in reply, or if he says anything, it is something like this,—'Every stone hereabouts has its own bloody tale to tell.'"

"NAPLES, *April* 13. *Monday.*

"We reached this place on Saturday night, and our terrors of bombardment, for some of our party did tremble, have subsided. Our fleet just poked its nose into the Bay on Sunday morning, but sailed away to Salerno, a port some ten miles distant, where it waits, I suppose, the turn which negotiations may take. I have seen our minister, Mr Temple, and he gave me to understand that we may safely remain till he throws out a hint to the contrary. Nothing can be more lovely than this day; my window looks towards the bay, and it glitters so as quite to dazzle me. Beautiful as it is, it is singularly like Weymouth. . . . . Instead of finishing my letter to you this morning, I was tempted by good company and fine weather to look about me; and first, after a passing glance at Vesuvius, which was unusually clear, we went to the Museum, and saw all the curious things collected from Pompeii and Herculaneum. There was the service of plate, which some active butler had spread out for an intended dinner, eighteen hundred years ago; the loaf which that day was to have been cut, the store of eggs and of chestnuts which were dressed somewhat sooner than was designed. Then there was Mrs Diomed's garment, at least a piece of it; the ornaments that were found upon her head, the ring on her finger, and the key which her hand still kept hold of; there was the helmet of

the faithful sentinel who was found at his post, and the iron to which the legs of three prisoners were still fixed; there were the appurtenances which belonged to a very fine lady, rouge among the rest. But it is difficult to say what there was not. It is strange to see that the world wanted and possessed in those days almost everything to which we now attach value."

"Wednesday, April 15.
Eight o'clock in the evening.

"We started soon after eight this morning for Pompeii. It is most curious to be thus, in 1840, walking about a town which in many respects is as fresh and as perfect as it was on the 23d August, A.D. 79. There were the streets with their ancient names, and the ruts worn by the carriages. At No. 1 Via Consularis, lived the Ædile Pansa with his name over the door, and just within it was found the skeleton of his porter. At No. 2 resided a poet, who, unlike his fraternity, appears to have been very wealthy. The house, though not large, was very elegant. Among his pictures was a beautiful and very well preserved one, of Venus and Cupid fishing. On his table were fish, bread, and olives. In his kitchen were found the bones of two of his cooks, with many less important articles of kitchen furniture. In another apartment, stretched on a bed, the left arm holding up the head, was found another body. In another house there was a table spread with five knives, and there were the skeletons of six men who seemed to have been surprised while they were making themselves comfortable; for on the table before them were eggs and ham, fish, figs, &c. At No. 6 resided the baker, and there were his grinding stones and his oven, in which there was still some bread. Not far off lived a musical gentleman, and many instruments of music were found in his house. In one room there were nine bodies, three of them with flageolets in their hands. Sallust's house in the same street was very elegantly furnished, and there we got a very good conception of the way in which he used to dine. At one end of the building there was a good painting, of windows, sky, and country. It appears that Mrs Diomed had taken refuge in the cellar, her husband was making his escape at the back of the house, and was there found standing upright. The statue of the Faun, which is much celebrated, was found in the centre of the garden of Marcus Tullius, round which there were the remnants of forty-four great pillars; he seemed to have lived well through the year, for there was a great number of large wine-jars, (*amphoræ*,) which were turned bottom upwards, shewing they had been recently emptied; there were several beautiful mosaic pictures, one of the Nile, with its animals and birds, sea-horses, alligators, snakes, and shoveller ducks, which last the boys thought admirably executed. There was also a very fine mosaic of Alexander and Darius. In a small room were found the remains of the whole family, at least twenty-four bodies of men, women, and children, also a silver candelabrum, and a good deal of money. In the adjacent Temple of Fortune we were struck with the brilliant whiteness of the marble, and we noticed half a square of very thick glass in an aperture between two apartments. The Forum was splendid. It was very extensive, and

gave us a good notion of the various purposes to which it was turned —a Senate House in one place; a Temple of Jupiter, if I recollect right, in another; the spots where they made speeches and measured corn; an exchange, &c., &c.

"But such a beautiful scene as there was before us — to the left, and immediately opposite to us, a line of hills; to the right, the sea with Castel-a-mare, and on its shores several white towns, with the Island of Capri, and the promontory of Minerva in the distance. Certainly this region is eminently beautiful. One of their national proverbs says, that Naples is a piece of heaven which has tumbled down upon earth.

"We had intended to dine in the Forum, but by mistake our dinner was laid out in a kind of barn-looking room at some little distance from it. To say nothing of our food, which, however, was very acceptable, we were highly amused by the whole scene. We had plenty of native waiters, but I do not think they mustered a single stocking among them. A musician made his appearance, who first played on a cracked instrument, and then sung a variety of fine Italian airs in very good style. Then he set two men and a boy figuring away in a dance, somewhat like an Irish jig; and finally renouncing his instrument, set to work dancing himself to the music of his own voice. The bard, however, like Walter Scott's, gave us to understand that the higher efforts of his art required the inspiration of a tumbler of wine. We afterwards saw the Temple of Isis. The worshippers stood below, the oracles were delivered from above, and we saw clearly the aperture by which the priest obtained admittance behind the altar, and spoke for the goddess when she happened to be in a silent mood. The guide assured us that he had tried the experiment, and the people below supposed that the voice really came from above. It seems that the priests made a good thing of it; for some money and wine were found and the skeleton of a man with an iron bar in his hand, with which he had endeavoured to break through the wall.

"We afterwards saw at some distance a beautiful theatre, as perfect, I should think, as it was at the moment of the eruption. Also an immense amphitheatre in an equal state of preservation; so that we have the clearest conception of the stage on which the captives and Christians fought with wild beasts, and of the order in which the gentle folks of Pompeii sat while they were amusing themselves with this delicious spectacle. But it began to grow cold; so my wife and I returned home in our carriage, and I gladly leave it to others to supply you with further information."

At the end of April he was compelled to hasten to England on account of the African business, leaving the rest of the party to follow him.

TO MISS GURNEY, AT ATHENS.

"FONTAINEBLEAU, *Sunday, May* 10.

"If an angel were to offer to tell me at this moment any earthly news, the question I should ask him would be, 'How fares it with

our Athenians? Has the time gone merrily with them? Are they safe and sound, satisfied and happy? And are they now sitting on Mars' Hill, reading, as we have done to-day, the 17th chapter of Acts?' What a curious scene that was, and how the Stoics would have wondered, had they been told by an oracle that the barbarian babbler before them would be more renowned at the end of two thousand years than Theseus or Themistocles! and that in a little bit of an island, which they had never heard of, the time would come when his description of them — their scorn — their avidity for news — would be copied off at the rate of one a minute!

"Well, I can truly say I have eagerly watched you, thought of you, and sailed with you; and my first inquiry every morning has been—'Is the day fine for our Attic party?' Alas! the answer has not always been gladdening. Our days have been alternately wet and dry, never very fine, sometimes excessively wet; so I fear for you. Surely I shall find a line from you at Paris to-morrow. 'At Paris to-morrow!' you will say; 'why, how you must have raced!' Nay, we have travelled very slowly; up betimes in the morning, always housed before eight in the evening, and yet here we are, notwithstanding we lost half a day for want of horses, half a day by breaking our springs, and half a day by our wish to see the city of Lyons.

"Our journey, which cost so many sighs before we started, has been nothing else but pleasure. Gurney Barclay has been a capital companion. He is always gay and cheerful; humours me in the choice of rooms and dishes; does all the work; reads in the Bible to me the first stage; talks when I want a chat, and holds his tongue or goes out a stage or two when I want to meditate; or reads Byron to me when I am tired of my own employments. I suppose you have read the "Giaour" and the "Corsair?" They have furnished me with charming ideas of Grecian scenery. In our voyage to Marseilles, I saw the sun rise out of the sea, and he did, indeed, come forth 'as a bridegroom out of his chamber.' I had been reading Byron the evening before, with, I confess, unexpected admiration, — but sitting upon the deck that morning, and reading the 19th Psalm as the sun began to peep over the waves, I thought that David was the greater poet of the two. The verses of Byron's I had been reading, as we floated by the hills between Genoa and Marseilles, were those beginning—

> 'Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
> Behind Morea's hills the setting sun;
> Not as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
> But one unclouded blaze of living light,
> O'er the hushed deep the yellow beam he throws,
> Gilds the green wave that trembles as it glows,' &c.

"They are charming, as much for their fidelity as for their poetry, but Byron never ploughed through a perfectly calm sea at the rate of nine knots an hour; if he had, he could not but have described the velvet waves, as they were turned up by the steamer, without breaking. I never saw anything so lovely.

"But now to answer your questions. Yes, I am well, famously well, no headache, no cough, no cramp, *no nothing*. I am in capital

spirits, hoping that I am going to see my 'children's children, and peace upon Africa.'

"The roads, to my surprise, have been very good, and the country all the way from Marseilles very pretty. I wish my wife would return by it; it would be so safe for her monster of a carriage. She saw it when the trees were in the sear and yellow leaf; but now, the olives first, then the walnuts, last of all, the forest trees, are in full foliage, and give one quite a new idea of France."

The last in the series of Mr Buxton's letters is dated from Havre de Grace:—

"*May* 15, 1840.

"My Dear A. & C.,—We are going to start to-night for England. The wind is fair, the sea smooth, and we hope to breakfast to-morrow at Southampton. I was exceedingly amused with your letters from Ancona; I know you put in all that Greek to puzzle me, but there you were mistaken, for I made it all out. While I was at Paris Madame Pelet was most kind to me, and introduced me to many persons whom I wished to see, and especially to some good abolitionists. I called on M. de St Antoine, and was much pleased with his heartiness. I think he is more likely to be useful than any of them; he has so much heart in the work. It was, I think, this day seventeen years ago that I first brought forward the slavery question, and on Wednesday thirty-three years I was married; the two chief events of my life."

CHAPTER XXVII.

He arrived in England in tolerable health, and full of impatience to carry out his plans for the suppression of the slave trade, by the establishment of lawful commerce in Africa. To these he at once devoted himself, with all the ardour that might be expected after the period of relaxation he had enjoyed. In order to bring the whole case effectually before the public, a meeting was held on the 1st of June; at which, to the high gratification of the African Society, H.R.H. Prince Albert consented to preside. The meeting took place in Exeter Hall, and formed, say the contemporary papers, "a most grand and magnificent display of national feeling."

After an address from Prince Albert, Mr Buxton moved the first resolution, concluding with these words:—

"I do not forget the military triumphs which this country has achieved; but there is a road to glory more noble, more illustrious, purer, and grander than the battles of Waterloo and Trafalgar;—to arrest the destruction of mankind; to pour a blessing upon a continent in ruins; to send civilisation and the mild truths of the gospel over a region, in comparison with which Britain herself is

but a speck upon the ocean;—this is the road to true and enduring renown: and the desire and prayer of my heart is that her Majesty may tread it; and that, crowned with every other blessing, she may

> 'Shine the leader of applauding nations,
> To scatter happiness and peace around her,
> To bid the prostrate captive rise and live,
> To see new cities tower at her command,
> And blasted nations flourish in her smile.'"

Shortly afterwards, it was intimated to Mr Buxton, by Lord John Russell, that it was proposed to confer the rank of Baronet upon him. Having ascertained that the idea had not been suggested to the Government by any of his friends, but was a spontaneous mark of their approbation of his conduct, he accepted the title with gratification.

The summer was spent in active preparation for the Niger Expedition, for the service of which three iron steamers, the *Albert*, the *Wilberforce*, and *Soudan*, were fitted out; and to the great satisfaction of all who were interested in the subject, the command was given to Captain Henry Dundas Trotter; Commander William Allen was appointed to the *Wilberforce*, and Commander Bird Allen to the *Soudan*. These gentlemen and Mr William Cook * were the four commissioners empowered to make treaties with the native chiefs for the abolition of the slave trade.

The African Civilisation Society engaged several scientific gentlemen to accompany the expedition; Dr Vögel as botanist, Mr Roscher as mineralogist and miner, Dr Stanger as geologist, and Mr Fraser, Curator of the Zoological Society of London, as naturalist. Mr Uwins a draughtsman, and Mr Ansell a practical gardener or seedsman, were also appointed; and the Church Missionary Society was allowed to send the Rev. Frederick Schön and Mr Samuel Crowther † to examine into the practicability of establishing missions on the banks of the Niger.

The object of the expedition was to explore that great artery of Western Africa, the river Niger; to examine the capabilities of the country along its banks; to enter into treaties with the native chiefs for the abolition of the slave

* Well known as the Captain of the *Cambria*, which saved the crew of the *Kent*, East Indiaman.

† The Rev. S. Crowther (who is an African Negro) having been ordained by the Bishop of London, is now zealously labouring as a missionary at Abeokouta.

trade; to clear the road for commercial enterprise, and to afford that enterprise the security which alone seemed necessary for its development.

Sir Fowell Buxton and his friends were also extremely anxious that this opportunity should not be lost, of putting the natives in the way of cultivating the soil, and drawing forth its varied and immense resources.

TO SIR THOMAS DYKE ACKLAND, BART.

"*August*, 1840.

"This consideration has presented itself to me with great force—we never shall have again so favourable an opportunity for making an experiment in agriculture. The few people whom we shall send will go out under the escort and protection of the vessels. They will be carried through the mangroves and miasma of the delta by steam; they will have the medical help of at least eight surgeons or physicians; above all, they will have the sound and cool judgment of Captain Trotter to restrain them from settling, unless the circumstances of climate, soil, and disposition of the natives should be very favourable. If, then, we are ever to make the attempt, why lose such an opportunity? Our intention is to make a mere commencement, on a most moderate scale. If it answer, we shall enlarge our operations hereafter, and we shall have something practical and positive to lay before the public."

It was at length resolved to adopt this agricultural experiment, and £4000 were subscribed for the purpose. Referring to this plan for a model farm, Sir Fowell says, in a letter addressed to Miss Gurney, on the 6th of December—

"I cannot conclude these particulars about Africa without telling you of a text which has been cheering me up all day; 'There shall be showers of blessing, and the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them." (Ezekiel xxxiv. 26–28.)

The severe attacks made upon his plans by some of the leading journals, gave him much pain; "But," he tells Mrs Johnston, "I cannot help remembering, when I feel the breezes that blow upon us now, what the gales were in 1825 and 1826, when our anti-slavery bark put to sea. That cause was indeed cradled in a hurricane, and yet how safely is it havened!"

Throughout his correspondence, innumerable passages occur which shew his extreme anxiety for the safety of

those who were voluntarily about to encounter so dangerous a climate. He says, in a letter to Captain Washington—

"Trotter tells me that the expense of the ventilation already exceeds the estimate by £1400, and that a further expense of £500 is still required, which he will not proceed to incur till he has the authority of the Government. Now, I am as clear as daylight about two points: first, that the Government ought to pay this; and secondly, that if they will not, we must; and that, therefore, it ought to be so proceeded with, as not to delay the departure of the expedition. As far as I am concerned, I give my hearty concurrence, and will take my full share of the responsibility."

To Mr Samuel Gurney, after requesting him to attend a meeting of the Agricultural Committee, and pay in a subscription for him :—

"I leave it to you to put down my name for the sum you think right. To tell you the truth, I had thought of being very mean in my subscription. In one way or another Africa has cost me a good round sum, and on this ground I thought myself justified in subscribing only £1000; but if you think that the smallness of this will discourage other people and do mischief, put me down for two, or three, or four thousand. I am very glad to think that Africa has a friend like you, more able, and more willing to give."

On the 7th of August, Dr Lushington and Sir Fowell Buxton addressed a letter to Lord John Russell, setting forth the importance of establishing the model farm. After this, he was constrained to go into the country for the re-establishment of his health. "To tell you the truth," he writes to Sir George Stephen, "I am dead beat; I do not recollect ever to have felt so languid and good for nothing."

TO THE RIGHT HON. STEPHEN LUSHINGTON, D.C.L.

"MY DEAR LUSHINGTON,—Dr Farre has been pleased to write me a letter, telling me that I have just this alternative, viz., that it is open to me now, either to live or to die for Africa; but that if my judgment be in favour of the former mode of proceeding, I must 'cut and run,' 'go to the country and animalise.' This is curiously in concurrence with what Dr Holland told me six months ago.* I think I shall send you these medical letters, for if there be anything on earth which I mortally hate, it is the sense that I am skulking away from the field of battle, while you, in spite of your ailments, go on fighting manfully. But I really cannot help it; there is not a stroke of work left in my great carcase. I am like my old horse John Bull; he does well enough for a lady to take a canter in the

* Dr Holland, some time before, wrote to Mrs Buxton:—"From what I have seen, Mr Buxton is working beyond the power which even the strongest natural constitution can give."

park, but give him a brush along the road, or a burst across the fields, and he is done up for a month.

"Now, what does all this tend to? This,—that I must avail myself of your permission to leave town this week, subject to being recalled by you on any great emergency, particularly with regard either to treaties or instructions."

Private anxieties were now added to his public labours; but these occupied his thoughts far less than Africa; he thus writes from Bury, while on his way to London, in obedience to a summons from Lord John Russell:—

"*August* 27, 1840.

"It will cheer you to hear that I am so far on my journey, safe and sound, remarkably comfortable, and perfectly well into the bargain. . . . . What are mines, and miseries, and mail coaches, as compared with the vision, all sunshine, of a people, thousands and hundreds of thousands, springing from bondage to liberty, from stripes and howling to wages and singing, from being things to being men, from blindness to the gospel? . . . .

"I feel very thankful, and am a happy man this night."

Dr Lushington, however, and Sir George Murray attended a meeting at Manchester. Another, at which many of the nobility and gentry of Norfolk were present, was held in St Andrew's Hall, Norwich, Mr Villebois, then high sheriff of Norfolk, being in the chair; but a large body of Chartists broke into the hall, and after great uproar and confusion compelled the meeting to disperse. It is to this meeting that the following letter alludes:—

"My Dear Lushington,—What with the Chartists at Norwich, and the newspapers, and the Review, and the bitter resolutions of the Liverpool Anti-Slavery Society, and the recognition of Texas, and the threatened admission of slave-grown sugar, clouds seem to be gathering round about us. But I do not mean to allow these things utterly to vex me. I am as sure as ever, that we are upon the right tack, and, if so, we shall beat them all yet. My chief anxiety is, that the instructions to the commissioners, and the model treaty, should be finished in good style. I will be with you at dinner on Wednesday, and we will talk over these matters."

The motto of the Buxton family had been, "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Of this lengthy but appropriate sentence, he retained only the last clause; and "Do it with thy might" was the motto attached to the arms which he bore as a baronet. "But I do not think," he writes to a friend, "my motto and I square well together now-a-days. I have no 'might,' nor

energy, nor pluck, nor anything of that sort, and this kind of listlessness reaches even to my two pet pursuits, negroes and partridges. In short, I feel myself changed in almost everything."

As the time for the departure of the vessels was now drawing near, he became anxious that a day of prayer should be appointed for the safety and success of an expedition which would be exposed to so many dangers. "Pray do not let us lose sight of this," he wrote to Mr Coates, then one of the secretaries of the Church Missionary Society; "never was there a case which more required the Divine blessing."

He several times minutely inspected the vessels fitted out for the expedition, which were then lying in the river; and he was one of the party which waited upon H. R. H. Prince Albert, when he visted them on the 23d of March.

TO MISS GURNEY.

"LEAMINGTON, *April* 1, 1841.

"Now I must tell you about Prince Albert's visit to the vessels. I went an hour before he was expected, and found everything in the most perfect order, and the officers in full dress. Trotter looked remarkably well in his uniform, and I was glad to have the opportunity of seeing him actually engaged in the command of his people. At the appointed time, two carriages and four drove on to the quay, containing Prince Albert, Mr Anson, Major Keppel (our late member for Norfolk), and half-a-dozen others. I was upon the quarter-deck, and Professor Airy with me, near the steps, which the Prince immediately came up. He greeted me with the most good-natured familiarity, and expressed his pleasure at seeing me 'on board my fleet.' He then closely examined everything, and seemed to take great delight in the whole concern, and to understand mechanics. He was especially delighted with a buoy, fixed ready at the stern of the ship, to be let down at a moment's notice. It contained a light, which (at least they said so) water only inflamed. This was for the purpose of saving any one who might happen to fall overboard at night. I said to Keppel, not intending the Prince should hear me, (which, however he did,) 'I wish his Royal Highness would order one of his suite, yourself, for example, to be thrown overboard, that we might save your life by this apparatus.' The Prince took up the idea, and seemed half inclined to set Keppel a swimming, in order that we might have the gratification of the salvage. After examining everything in the 'Albert,' the boat came alongside; the Prince and six of his attendants got in, and I was also invited, and was not very far from having reason to regret the honour. The wind was blowing hard, and the tide rolling along at its full force. Our sailors were not accustomed to the navigation of

the Thames, so the tide ran away with us, and dashed us with considerable violence against a yacht at anchor, the 'William and Mary.' We got entangled amongst the ropes attached to her anchor, and a cry was raised from the vessels, 'You will be dragged over, lie down!' Down went his Royal Highness flat to the bottom of the boat, and without ceremony we all bundled down too. As it was, the rope scraped along my back. When we got clear, the Prince sprang up, laughing heartily at the adventure, saying 'I have had one ducking before this year, when I fell through the ice, and I thought we were going to have a second of a much worse kind.' The alarm felt on board the vessels at our situation was very considerable; and Bird Allen had ordered his boats to be lowered.

"After visiting the two other vessels, the Prince took leave of Trotter and the company, and expressed himself highly pleased with what he had seen."

On the 14th of April 1841, Captain Trotter and Commander William Allen sailed for the Niger, with the *Albert* and *Wilberforce*, the *Soudan* having put to sea a few weeks earlier. It need not be said that this event was one full of the deepest interest to Sir Fowell. His prayers were indeed fervent for the success of the expedition, and the welfare of its gallant commanders and crews; and, though deeply impressed with the risks they were about to incur, his unshaken confidence in the presence and providence of God did not fail him now. The chief source of apprehension lay in the deadly climate; but against its dangers every human precaution had been taken. The ships were to steam as rapidly as possible through the mouths of the rivers, where the miasma chiefly prevails. Dr Reid had invented a system of ventilation by which a constant current of air, impregnated with chloride of lime, could, by the agency of the steam engines, be maintained through all parts of the vessels; a large proportion of the crews were natives of Africa, and the medical staff was remarkably able and efficient. With these precautions, — the whole expedition, also, being under the command of so able and judicious a man, whose eminent qualifications had pointed him out for this responsible office, — it was confidently hoped that all the perils which, it was well known, were inseparable from such an undertaking, might be passed through with safety.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Letters of the Niger Expedition at length arrived, date "August 31. River Niger," and were of the most encouraging character. "With two exceptions," said Captain Trotter, "the whole company is in good health." "This," writes Sir Fowell, "I think highly satisfactory; and may God in His mercy grant that we may continue to hear such favourable reports. I am, I confess, not devoid of anxiety."

He thus replies to Captain Trotter's letter:—

"Northumberland Hall, *November* 13, 1841.

"I must write a few lines, if it be only to assure you that my anxiety is enhanced to hear tidings of the expedition, and more especially to hear about yourself, Captains William and Bird Allen and Cook. I was going to add Lieutenant Fishbourne; but I may as well say at once, all the officers and all the crews. I believe I should hardly exaggerate if I should say that while engaged in our family devotions I have never, or at all events most rarely, neglected to offer up my prayers for the safety of you all, for the success of the expedition, and for the outpouring of God's grace upon Africa. I trust and I believe that I am but one of many thousands with whom these things form a subject of daily and heartfelt prayer."

The Niger Expedition began to ascend the Nun branch of the river on the 20th of August 1841. Every one was in the highest spirits, cheered by the novelty and beauty of the scenery, and by the exhilarating feeling of the air, which appeared perfectly salubrious; and it was difficult to imagine that it could be otherwise. After Sunday Island, where the influence of the tides gives place to the constant downward current of the river, a marked change took place in the scenery. The banks began to be slightly elevated above the water, and, instead of the mangrove, a variety of beautiful palms and other trees formed a forest so dense, that, for upwards of a hundred miles (except where spots were cleared for cultivation) the eye could not penetrate more than a few yards beyond the water's edge. These cleared spots, containing yams, cocoas, cassadas, Indian corn, plantains, and occasionally sugar cane, began to appear immediately after leaving Sunday Island, and gradually became more frequent. Solitary huts were now succeeded by clusters, and clusters of huts by villages, the villages became larger and more populous; while the natives shewed

themselves less timid, and often came off in their canoes to hold intercourse with the ships. Their timidity at first had been great, but their disposition was invariably friendly. For the first fifty miles there was little appearance of trade; but afterwards large canoes were seen carrying palm oil, destined for Brass Town and Bonny.

As they proceeded, the amount of cultivation of yams, bananas, and plantains indicated still more extensive habitation. Some of the officers went into the country, and were much pleased with its openness and beauty. Here and there some nice plantations fenced in contained cassada, yams, pompions, Indian corn, and sugar cane, all kept clean, and in the best condition of culture. The people were found to be industrious, and more advanced in civilisation than their neighbours lower down the river: their grounds much better cultivated, manufactures more ncouraged, and their social comforts increasing.

"Up to this time (the conclusion of the treaty with the Attah of Eggarah) the expedition," says Dr M'William, "had been fortunate beyond all expectation. The Delta had been passed, and we were entering the valley of the Niger, under circumstances seemingly the most auspicious. The crews contemplated with delight the novel and diversified scenery of the high land before them. With such prospects, so favourable beyond all anticipation, it is not to be wondered at if we indulged a rather sanguine hope that the continuance of health would be granted to us, and that we should, under Providence, thus be enabled to persevere in the great object of our mission."

On the 4th of September, fever of a most malignant character broke out in the *Albert*, and almost simultaneously in the other vessels. The expedition, notwithstanding, proceeded towards the confluence of the Niger and Tchadda, at which point an agreement had already been made with the Attah for the cession of land for a model farm. A tract of land was chosen near Mount Patteh, where the soil, although not of the best quality, grew a considerable quantity of cotton, and there seemed every probability that coffee would grow on the hills. There were on all sides traces of the ravages of the slave-trading Fulatahs; but, as the commissioners observed—

"The mere occupation of one or two stations by a few British subjects would have the effect of establishing confidence among the natives, who, once assured of the protecting care of Great Britain,

would be easily induced to build up their former habitations, and thus furnish a useful population, and have a beneficial effect on the surrounding tribes."

As soon as the land had been selected for the model farm, the people in the vicinity brought abundance of provisions to the new settlement for sale, and those who had nothing to dispose of came and hired themselves as labourers. Nothing could exceed the good feeling shewn by the natives on every occasion. Cotton cloths of good manufacture, spun cotton, calabashes beautifully carved and ornamented, tobacco, camwood balls, shea butter, dried buffalo flesh, and dried fish, were brought on board in great quantities. As with most Africans, traffic seemed to be the predominant passion with the people, with a good share of dexterity in turning a bargain to their own account.

"So far," says Mr Commissioner Cook, "the object of the expedition had been attained, and everything promised a favourable termination to the mission." But now sickness broke out on board, and increased with such appalling rapidity, that Captain Trotter deemed it advisable to send the sick back to the sea in the *Soudan*.

The intelligence that one of the steamers had returned to Fernando Po, and that nine men had died of the fever, reached England in the beginning of December. It may well be conceived how this news was felt by the friends of the cause in England. Sir Fowell Buxton writes to his son:—

"NORTHREPPS HALL, *December* 4, 1841.

"I was very glad to receive your letter, reminding me that, in such a storm, there is but one anchor; but that one all-sufficient. The blow, however, is tremendous. There is no comfort to be found under it, save in the assurance that it is the will and the work of our merciful God. Mysterious it certainly is; but could we survey the whole, there can be no doubt we should perceive that all was done in true mercy and never-failing love. Our text for the day has been, 'Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.' The sympathy of dear Catherine's letter was quite charming —it has been a great comfort both to my wife and me. I think Sir Robert Inglis could not have done a better thing than asking the Bishop to prepare a prayer for us. How extremely gratified I shall be, if a day is appointed for the purpose!"

TO THE SAME.

"*December* 6, 1841.

"Even now I do not wish the whole effort undone. A way, I

firmly believe, is opened for the missionary into the heart of Africa, and we have found, in some respects, greater facilities than we expected. And is the price we have to pay so intolerably heavy? Is the loss of nine men enough to damp all our zeal, and quench all our courage? Would it have been enough, if we had been at war with the French, or the Americans, or even the Chinese, to stop us? Would the public feeling have been quite satisfied if it were said, 'Why, we have lost nine men; we must give over; it would be madness to fight any longer!' Oh, but war with France is quite a different case; great national interests are concerned! And are no interests concerned in the overthrow of the slave trade, in the spread of gospel light over the darkness of Africa, in the addition of a fourth quarter to the productions and the requirements of the world? Not only the interests of the nation, but those of human nature are concerned in this expedition; and it is not a trifle that shall put us to flight. Perhaps these very calamities have been sent in order to try us, and to ascertain whether we have faith enough, sufficient reliance on the promises of God to hear our prayers, and to be near us in our trials. It may be that, after all, a better day is now dawning for Africa, and I am disposed to believe that this is the fact, and that, if we do our part manfully, we shall not be defeated, even in this very expedition."

The next tidings which reached England did not confirm this hope. The sickness still continuing, Captain Trotter was compelled, on the 21st of September, to direct the *Wilberforce* to follow the *Soudan* to the sea, whilst he and Captain Bird Allen pushed forward in the *Albert*, in hopes of reaching Rabba, a very large town, the capital of the Fulatahs. After leaving the confluence, the banks of the river were found to be better peopled, and "a great many villages" were observed. In the market-place of Gori were not less than from fifteen hundred to two thousand people. The articles exposed for sale were bags of salt from Rabba, robes of various colours, country cloths, camwood in balls, iron-work, as hoes and shovels, Indian corn, ground nuts, twine, silk, seeds of various kinds, shea butter, straw hats with enormous brims, platters of wood, and calabashes beautifully carved.

Mr Schön also mentions "several large bags of cotton in its raw state." He asserts, that the price of cotton there could not be less than in England; but, he adds, "it is true that they might grow ten thousand times the quantity they are now growing." The trade of dyeing blue was carried on there; the blacksmith was busy at his anvil, and the grinders of the Guinea corn at the stones.

When, some weeks afterwards, the *Albert* descended the river, the commissioners found that at Budda, the furthest point of the Attah's territory, he had faithfully proclaimed the law against slave-trading :—

"The inhabitants," says Mr Schön, "candidly admitted that Budda had ever been a great slave-market, but said that from the time they heard that the Attah abolished the slave trade, they relinquished it altogether. They were glad to hear that an English settlement had been commenced at the confluence, and said that they would go and see how white people built houses and made farms; and they would settle near them to be protected from the Fulatahs. The same desire was expressed at Kinami, a few miles further—the first village in the Nufi country, which is tributary to the powerful and warlike Fulatah nation, who keep the Nufis in continual terror. The inhabitants of Kinami are estimated at one thousand by Captain Trotter. They occupy themselves in weaving, and carry on some trade with Egga in country cloths, ivory, and bees' wax."

Egga was the largest town yet seen on the banks of the river; the population was reckoned at seven or eight thousand. The people were in general tall and well made; the form of the head, the countenance, and the lighter shade of the colour of the skin, indicated an intermixture of the Caucasian with the Negro race. The manufacturing of country cloths was found to be the principal occupation of the people. There were no less than two hundred looms employed in various parts of the town.

At Egga, Captain Trotter had reached a point *three hundred and twenty miles from the sea.* He had accomplished his object with respect to two of the three kingdoms to which he had been sent; but he was now compelled to relinquish his hope of completing his work by reaching the town of Rabba. "A very little mediation on our parts," he observes, "might probably have had the effect of making the Nufi nation more independent, and less oppressed, and have tended materially to the diminution of the slave trade." But the sickness on board had become so very alarming, that it was found absolutely necessary, on the 4th of October, to steam down the river with all speed. Captain Bird Allen, who had been most anxious to persevere, and in fact almost all the officers and men on board, except the negroes, were seized with the deadly fever. Captain Trotter himself was at length disabled by it; and at this critical period the engineers also were too ill to per-

form their duty! Dr Stanger (the geologist), however, having learned how to manage the engines, from a scientific treatise on board, undertook to work them himself; and Dr M'William, in addition to his laborious duties in attending the sick, conducted the ship down the river, with the assistance of only one white sailor, "in the most able and judicious manner."

While the *Albert* was still a hundred miles from the sea, its disabled crew were surprised and delighted by seeing a steamer coming up the stream towards them It proved to be the *Ethiope*, commanded by Captain Becroft, who had been directed by Mr Jamieson to afford every assistance to the expedition. This timely assistance was of the greatest importance. Captain Becroft and his engineer took charge of the *Albert*, and brought her in safety to Fernando Po. It was hoped that Captain Bird Allen and his gallant fellow-sufferers would rapidly revive under the influence of its purer air; but many were already too much sunk to receive benefit, and the mortality was most painful. Of the three hundred and one persons who composed the expedition, when it commenced the ascent of the Niger, forty-one perished from the African fever. It may be worth while to observe, that of the one hundred and eight Africans on board not one died from the effects of the disease. Captain Bird Allen fell a victim to it, at Fernando Po, on the 21st of October.

Thus failed the NIGER EXPEDITION. From the facts stated by all the different gentlemen who were on board, and who have written accounts of what they saw, and also from the direct assertions of the four commissioners, it would appear that nothing but the climate prevented the expedition from fulfilling the most sanguine hopes of its promoters.

The natives proved to be far more inclined to trade, and far less barbarous and disorganised, than could have been supposed possible. They eagerly sought the protection of the British from their slave-trading oppressors, the Fulatahs; and that protection it would have been perfectly easy to give. The country, although some thought it less fertile than had been anticipated, was found to produce cotton, sugar-cane, coffee, indigo, ginger, arrowroot, dye-

woods, magnificent timber for ship-building, palm oil, and many other important articles of commerce. Ivory also was plentiful.

"The banks of the Niger," writes Captain W. Allen, "are populous, with the exception of the neighbourhood of the mangrove swamps; but wherever man has been able to get a firm footing, he has cleared away a patch for cultivation, and has built his hut. These are found to increase rapidly as we ascend the river. Large villages, towns, and even populous cities are met with. The banks of the Tchadda, however, have been almost depopulated by the frequent slave-catching expeditions. The country on both sides nevertheless is capable of supporting prodigious numbers: the luxuriance of the vegetation is beyond belief, and the palm-tree, which would form a groundwork for national wealth and prosperity, grows in the greatest abundance. . . . The strongest characteristic of the people is the love of traffic; it is indeed their ruling passion. Every town has a market, generally once in four days; but the principal feature is in the large fairs held at different points in the river, about once a fortnight, for what may be called their foreign trade, or intercourse with neighbouring nations. . . . Here, then, we have an immense and highly productive country, at no great distance from our shores, and which may even be said to diminish daily by the improvements in steam navigation. The nations inhabiting this valuable region are desirous of being supplied with our manufactures. . . . If the only interchangeable commodities were salt and palm oil, a profitable trade might be extended to the interior, and yet, with such vast resources and capabilities on both sides, the exports from the greatest commercial country in the world, which is seeking on all sides an outlet for its manufactures, is less than half a million sterling."

It was the climate, and the climate alone, that prevented the expedition from being the herald of Christianity to West Africa. The disposition of the natives was found to be eminently favourable to the settlement of missionaries among them.

"Their conduct," says Captain Trotter, "not only at the model farm, but on all other occasions that came under my notice, is a subject to which I feel much pleasure in adverting; as during the entire period in which the vessels under my command were in the Niger, not only the native chiefs of the country, but the people in general, evinced the most friendly disposition towards us, and this not only during our prosperity, whilst going up the river, but also in our forlorn condition, when coming down. . . . I may remark, that the desire evinced by the natives in the neighbourhood of the model farm to be taught the Christian religion, gives me reason to believe that when the day happily arrives of missionaries reaching that part of Africa, they will be gladly welcomed by the inhabitants."

In a despatch, addressed to Lord J. Russell from Iddah, the four commissioners expressly state their belief that "Christian missionaries and teachers may be safely and advantageously introduced into this part of Africa; a measure which, by the blessing of Almighty God, would tend effectually, in our opinion, to enlighten this unhappy country, and to put an end for ever to the abominable slave trade."

CHAPTER XXIX.

It may be well conceived with what anguish Sir Fowell Buxton received the melancholy tidings of the Niger Expedition. Deeply did he sympathise with the sufferings of the brave men who had attempted to carry out his plans; nor was he less dejected at feeling that the door was closed, for the present at least, through which he had hoped that so many blessings might have been poured upon Africa. His health, which had been undermined before, became gradually more feeble, and he could no longer bear any sustained mental exertion, especially if attended by any sense of responsibility. To a man, the law of whose nature it was to be at work, with head, hand, and heart, it was no slight trial to be thus prematurely laid aside. He was only fifty-five years of age; but already the evening was come of his day of ceaseless toil; nor was its close brightened by the beams of success and joy. The idea of what he termed "the incomparable horrors" of the slave trade, had fastened itself on his mind with the most vivid reality; the burning and plundered villages of Africa, the ships traversing the Atlantic with their cargoes of torture—these pictures were ever before him. When unconscious that he was observed, he would at times utter such groans as if his heart were sinking beneath its load. But his grief was not of that kind described by an old divine,* which "runs out in voice." He rarely spoke of the expedition,—to Captain Bird Allen's death he could scarcely allude at all; but his grave demeanour, his worn pale face, the abstraction of his manner, and the intense fervour of his supplications that

* Dr South.

God would "pity poor Africa,"—these shewed too well the poignancy of his feelings.

And yet the three years which elapsed between the failure of the Niger Expedition and his death, were brightened by much domestic happiness; by many country pleasures; by the great satisfaction of receiving, in the main, good tidings of the working of emancipation in the West Indies; by some encouragements about Africa: but, above all, by the exercise of faith, and the consolations of religion. During all that period, he was humble, patient, and resigned in an extraordinary degree; and especially was his heart overflowing with love to all around him, and with the living spirit of thanksgiving and prayer. His correspondence, after the lamentable issue of the expedition, shews that his mind did not sink under discouragement; and although he candidly admitted the ruin of his own scheme, he yet cherished hopes that the same great end might be achieved in some other and better way.

To the Rev. J. M. Trew Sir Fowell thus expressed his feelings, when he received the last painful accounts:—

"I need not tell you the grief excited by your heavy tidings. I mourn from my inmost heart. But what can I say? It has pleased God to send us *a deep disappointment*—a personal, as well as public calamity of no common kind. That dear Bird Allen:—his long illness—the sickness and suffering so grievously prevailing: that gallant fellow Stenhouse—poor Willie—and the others! A mercy indeed it is to have had Trotter spared. . . . . Now we must meet the case fairly, and we cannot conceal from ourselves, that this effort for this time has been frustrated. The Government seem to decide the question for us by recalling the expedition, and our course so far is clearly pointed out—to pause till Captain Trotter's return, till we have the facts fully before us, till they have been digested. It may then appear that from the ruins of this enterprise another may arise, consisting of negroes; or it may appear that single missionaries must do the work. The call seems to me to be very distinct, to be still, to wait in faith and submission for further light, and for our Master's will concerning His own work."

What he still could do, de did with his usual energy; and amid all his own sorrow he strove to maintain the hopes of others. In a letter to the Rev. C. W. Bingham, after alluding to the mortality on board the vessels, he adds—

"But, on the other hand, the natives received us kindly; they had no objection to our making settlements in the country; they supplied

us with provisions, and sold us land; they have entered into treaties for the abolition, both of the slave trade and of human sacrifices; and seem only more desirous to receive, than we can be to send them, missionaries and instructors. This looks as if 'the set time were come,' and makes me hold fast to conviction, that, although *we* may fail, and *our* plans prove worthless, the day is at hand when the right methods will be devised, and when Africa will be delivered. God grant that that happy day may soon arrive!"

"Your favourite oracle," he writes to Miss Gurney, "thunders forth every day a leading article against me, and attacks me in poetry and prose; all of which does not excite a moment's vexation in my mind. . . . . At all events, we must not desert Africa till we see that all exertions are useless." He earnestly hoped that the discouragement would not preclude further efforts. Thus he writes :—

"Grant, for the sake of argument, that events have confuted my 'Remedy;' that the latter half of my book be proved to be mere nonsense; yet the former part remains intact. No one denies the enormous number of human beings whom the slave trade annually devours. Because one plan has failed, are we to submit in patience to this incomparable evil? Because we erred in one attempt to subdue it, are we henceforward to act as if we were reconciled to the abomination; as if one abortive effort were all that humanity pleads for, or that is required at our hands by the gospel of Christ? Again, our exertions have *not* been wholly useless. At all events we know one thing, which we did not know before. We know how the evil is to be cured; that it is to be done by native agency; by coloured ministers of the gospel. Africa is to be delivered by her own sons!"

Strongly impressed with these feelings, he went to London early in February, and passed a few weeks at the house of his son; giving all the strength he could muster to meetings and consultations on the subject. The whole spring was spent in a succession of painful efforts to gather some benefit for Africa from the wreck of the Niger Expedition. The model farm was still in existence; and to obtain the promise of an occasional visit to it from a Government steamer was one of the principal objects at which he earnestly aimed. The heads of the African Civilisation Society obtained an interview with Lord Stanley which Sir Fowell thus describes :—

"We entered the chamber of the great man, anxious, I take it,—and one at least having on his lips and in his heart, 'O Lord, give us good speed this day.'

of Italian. Oh! this plague of languages! Next came up Prince Borghese, a very pleasing young man, who spoke a little English, and before whom I threw the proposal that he should become the chairman of a Prison Discipline Association. I was afterwards introduced to the Duc de Bordeaux, with whom I had some conversation on the slave trade, and who expressed a wish to see my book. He also said mighty civil things. Poor fellow! he has a sweet expression of countenance; conceive Mrs ——, with the same expression, and the same extreme clearness and cleanliness of skin, but with broader features and a stouter person, and a heavier eye, and you have a good picture of the man.

"The Pretender's course is not a smooth one. If he has either extreme of character he may do well. Let him be excessively quiet, devoid of ambition and enterprise, that may do. Or let him be clever, daring, sagacious, ambitious, and commanding, and that, perhaps, will do. But, if there is any mixture in his composition, — if the least dash of adventure is coupled with his love of ease, or the least love of peace is mingled with his ambition, he will assuredly be a martyr. One cannot see the Duke without liking him, and wishing that he may have the good sense to steer clear of turbulent politics.

"At dinner I sat next to Lady Shrewsbury's sister, who told me everything about everybody. Among the rest, that that beautiful refined creature, the Princess Doria, actually goes every day in the Holy Week to wash the feet of the patients in the hospital. Well! well! good people may abhor the Roman Catholics if they please, and may feel, as I do, that they are led dangerously astray in their doctrines, but I never will join in setting them down as creatures devoid of deep feelings of religion, nor can I deny that there is humility and self-denial in such an act as I have described.

"On Tuesday, after seeing the San Michele, I went with Lord Meath, Lord De Mauley, and Richards, to the church of San Augustino. The panels adjacent to the altar were covered with knives and pistols, which had been presented by robbers and murderers to the Virgin. I suppose you have heard of Spink's adventure; it made us look upon the knives with something more of interest. On Wednesday we went to the Corsini Palace: there are two *such* pictures there of Christ, with a crown of thorns; the one, the *Ecce Homo* of Guercino, the other, in some respects still more touching, by Carlo Dolce. There was also the exquisite picture of the Virgin and Child, by Murillo. I longed to steal it. Yesterday we saw a splendid collection at the Borghese Palace, and then we had a long conversation with a Jesuit. I am very anxious to make myself master of their system of missions and of that of the Lyons Society. They seem to effect so much, with means so limited; besides, I am persuaded they are upon the right principle. Their whole fight is for *native* missionaries. Their first act is to establish schools, in which, however, the instruction of the people is a very secondary object; the main purpose being to get a number of children, so far educated that they may pick out a few fitted by talent, disposition, and ready reception of Christianity, to be sent to Rome to receive a thorough education. Here they detain them, in some cases for

ments we may meet with, it is our duty to persevere. And again, that the Lord of compassion and righteousness is, and will be, with those who faithfully labour for the purpose of rescuing millions of the human race, not only from their moral darkness, but from the intense sufferings which they now endure. May He hasten the day when the gospel, with its train of attendant blessings, shall shine forth upon Africa.

"I am very thankful that, although I am debarred from taking my share of labour, your Lordship and other faithful men are still prosecuting the good cause."

Nothing could be stronger than the contrast between the exulting hopes of the meeting in 1840, and the sorrowful tidings which were to be communicated to the one now convened; nevertheless its tone was less desponding than had been feared.

Lord John Russell, with generous courage, came forward and took a prominent part in the proceedings, boldly asserting the soundness of the principles on which the schemes had been founded. The present Bishop of Oxford spoke with hereditary eloquence and feeling. He fully admitted the disappointment, but, like Lord John Russell, he did not fear to uphold the principles which had actuated them, the righteousness of the cause, and the certainty of ultimate success, if discouragement did not paralyse their exertions.

Among the speakers were the Bishops of Gloucester and Norwich, Lords Mahon, Sandon, Teignmouth, and Fortescue, Sir R. H. Inglis and Sir T. D. Acland.

TO LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

"*June* 23, 1842.

"My Dear Lord John,—You must excuse me for giving you the trouble of reading a line from me, but I feel personally so obliged to you for your well-timed and powerful assistance, and for your generosity in coming forward publicly, and claiming your share of the obloquy which has been cast on us, that I must be permitted to offer you my most sincere thanks. The effects of the late meeting will not, I am persuaded, be lost. It has already put us in better spirits, and will, I trust, convince the country that the efforts made to reclaim and civilise Africa, are not so wild and visionary as they have been described."

It may be supposed how soothing to his feelings, at this time, was the following letter from his highly valued friend, the Bishop of Calcutta:—

"Bishop's Palace, Calcutta, *April* 9, 1842.

"Be not cast down, my dearest friend; yield not to disappointment and sorrow; all will work for good. The grand blow is struck; the monster must fall like Dagon before the ark; and your honest, devoted, anxious heart shall yet be comforted with blessed tidings: and indeed when we consider how little we worms of the earth can scan the designs of an infinite Being, we need not wonder that grief and disquietude sometimes follow on our best concerted schemes. Supposing all our hopes to fail, Providence has other ways of bringing about the redemption of the enslaved population of Africa.

"Let us, then, go on cheerfully in the use of all such means as are open to us, and new and unsuspected blessings will arise in due time. Gird up the loins of your mind; be sober and hope to the end. Nothing we do for God in the cause of humanity is lost either to the cause or to ourselves. Soon, soon the tempest will be calmed; soon life will be past; soon the heavenly port will open to our frail and weather-beaten bark, and we shall have reached that 'good land.' . . . . Ever believe me, your sincere and affectionate friend,

"D. Calcutta."

In July, 1842, Lieutenant Webb courageously volunteered to go up the Niger in the *Wilberforce* to visit the model farm. He found the settlers all well: a large portion of ground had been cleared; and from twenty to thirty acres were "in good order, mainly planted with cotton, the growing crops of which were very promising."

On the other hand, owing to the murder of Mr Carr, while returning to the model farm from Fernando Po, the settlers had been deprived of all effective superintendence. Mr Moore, the negro in charge, had no authority over his companions; and, in consequence, the most complete disorganisation had taken place. These evils Lieutenant Webb expected to remedy by leaving Mr Hensman, the surgeon *pro tempore* of the *Wilberforce*, as superintendent; but sickness appearing on board, Mr Hensman could not be spared. Lieutenant Webb therefore broke up the settlement, and brought all the people away.

The tribes which had collected round the farm expressed the deepest regret at its being removed; and even displeasure, that the white man should come and sit down among them, "to teach them his fashion," and then go away. For a moment Sir Fowell's equanimity was ruffled by this bitter disappointment.

"As to the model farm," he writes to Mr Trew, "it makes one mad to think that it was going on so well — *our* experiment likely

to be successful,—and that they were torn away because Lieutenant Webb had not a superintendent to spare them. However, all regrets are kept down by the reflection that at the head of our cause stands One who cannot err."

TO HIS YOUNGER SONS, AT TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

"NORTHREPPS HALL, *February*, 1843.

"MY DEAR FOWELL AND CHARLES,—Our Sabbath day's business is over, and our family reading finished. Well, you have been much in all our minds to-day. I hope it has been a tranquillising day to you, and that, knowing that you have each done your best, you are satisfied in committing yourselves and the result of the examination to Him whose province it is to decide what shall be the issue of every effort. You must bear in mind, that though you may lose the places at which you aim, you will not therefore lose the advantage of your studies. The knowledge you have acquired, and your habits of application, will in great measure cleave to you all your life long. Despite all my philosophy, however, I shall most heartily rejoice in your success.

"Now, God bless you! May you not forget to pray for help, knowing that it is expressly promised to those who humbly and devoutly ask it, 'Commit your way unto the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass.'"

In January, 1843, Sir Fowell proceeded to London, to bear his part in the painful duty of dissolving the African Civilisation Society. In reply to the summons to attend the meeting, he says, in a letter to the Rev. J. M. Trew, "I feel as if I were going to attend the funeral of an old and dear friend." After the resolutions for suspending the operations of the Society had been passed, he addressed the meeting in a tone of deep feeling. He warmly thanked the committee for their past exertions, and, although he insisted strongly that the expedition had not failed in any one of its great objects, still he admitted that there was a necessity for the step that had now been taken. He alluded to the attacks of the papers, but added that, "painfully as he felt all the disasters which had attended the expedition, he did not accuse himself of having been imprudent or over-sanguine in the measures which he had proposed."

A meeting of the Ladies' Society for educating the negroes in the West Indies, which he attended about this time, bore a brighter aspect. He writes: —

"I was quite fired by it, and cheered. You cannot conceive how well Trew spoke; and Sir Edward Parry capitally too. I came to the conclusion that I ought never to be low, never downcast, all the

rest of my pilgrimage, the accounts are so very bright of those for whom my heart used to bleed a few years ago. And these blessings I firmly trust will last long after I shall be mouldering in the dust."

Some years before this time he had purchased a small estate at Trimingham, on the coast of Norfolk, four miles from Cromer; and he took great interest in executing various plans for its improvement. One of the farms he retained in his own hands, and took great pains to bring the land into the highest state of cultivation. In 1840 he bought some more land at Runton, on the other side of Cromer, and on both these properties he formed extensive plantations. On commencing them, he wrote to Mr Aubin at Rome:—

"NORTHREPPS HALL, *September* 5.

"I am now once more settled at home, but as yet I have only been able to get out shooting once. The fact is, I have been buying an estate, where I hope, on some future day, to shew you some partridges and a pheasant or two; and I find more sport in the delicious occupation of projecting improvements, and letting the imagination run wild in visions of future woods and groves, which have yet to be planted, than in pursuing preserved game. After all, I like your wild Macarese shooting (bandits, assassins, vipers, and all) better than our tame sport."

These plantations formed his chief amusement during the last years of his life. "His friends," says Mr J. J. Gurney, "will not fail to remember the lively pleasure which they enjoyed in accompanying him over the hills and dales of Runton and Trimingham, while he pointed out to them the exquisite views of the sea, already rendered more lovely by the young and rising plantations in the foreground." Mr Herbert Johnson, the former proprietor of the Runton estate, was his constant and kind companion in his endeavours to improve it. His plantations were called (as his horses had been in earlier days) after the objects which were most deeply interesting to him at the time. One wood went by the name of "the Niger," another by that of "Fernando Po," and so on.

TO ANDREW JOHNSTON, ESQ.

"NORTHREPPS HALL, *February* 10, 1843.

"Our party here, although very small, and with a touch of the lonely, is very cheerful and comfortable.

"At least ninety families have been supported during this hard

weather, by double trenching my plantations, and earning, I am happy to say, on the average two shillings a day. But this last snow has beat them, and they can do no more at present. I am getting decidedly stronger, and feel more like myself.

"All Earlham came here yesterday to dinner. I have been riding with a large party, to see my new plantations; and we are all greatly delighted. Love to all. In truth, I can say from my heart, 'The good Lord bless you all.'"

One of his friends, observing to him, "Your plantations will some day be the pride of the country, if England stands." "England stand!" said he. "I will never believe that any country will fall, which has abolished slavery as England has done."

The following recollections of Sir Fowell, during the latter years of his life, are from the pen of his secretary, Mr Nixon, and may aid the reader in forming a just idea of his character:—

"The qualities which struck me most in Sir Fowell Buxton were his perseverance, benevolence, disregard of outside appearances, his entire devotion to what was practical, and, perhaps, beyond all, his *humility*.

"As regards perseverance; before entering upon an undertaking, he seemed to consider, not whether success in it were *probable*, but whether it were *possible;* if so, he would set about it at once, and never give in till that success was gained.

"His humility led him to esteem no one unworthy of a certain portion of respect, however low his condition;—so that I never in any instance saw the principle of that Essay by Dr Channing, which has for its title 'Honour due unto all men,' so fully and consistently carried out as by him.

"In June, 1840, a few days after I became his secretary, he went to town from Upton, leaving me the task of making an epitome of his 'Slave Trade and Remedy.' When he returned we walked up and down the lawn, I reading my paper to him. He listened very attentively, and when it was finished, he tapped me on the shoulder, and said, 'Very well done indeed, Mr Nixon; it does you great credit, but it won't do for me. It would make a capital flowery speech for a young member of Parliament; but I want something more practical, *very brief and very strong:* so now come along indoors, and let us make a beginning.'

"I never recall the period of my connexion with Sir Fowell without a feeling of astonishment at his wonderful powers of concentration, which enabled him to apply every atom of his energies to the one purpose in hand. In carrying out a great object, he was borne along irresistibly, and to compass it every effort *must* be made, which human ingenuity could point out, or bodily endurance admit of. He used to become far too deeply absorbed to be conscious of fatigue, and would often laugh at me good-humouredly when I complained

that I felt very tired, and should like to give up for awhile. 'Ti
Nixon! why, you don't know what it is to be tired. When you
had nineteen years in Parliament, you'll be able to form s
opinion of what it means: however, we must finish this job at
rate. I don't care how many white slaves I make to save the bl
ones!'

"When he returned alone from Italy, at which time I became
secretary, he was overwhelmed with business connected with
Niger Expedition. These affairs were so widely ramified, that n
but a powerful mind could have sustained such constant and he
pressure. When the day's labour was over, he was freque
quite unable to sleep, and night after night I was called upon
read aloud to him, in the hope of soothing him to rest. Man
time when I was at length dropping off into a lower and lower t
believing that his slumbers had begun, he would stop me sudde
exclaiming, 'Get me my memorandum-book, Mr Nixon; set do
so and so,' and he would go on until there was work enough set do
for the next week perhaps. Then came another monotonous p
or two of the book I was reading, and then up he would get, sayi
'It's of no use, I can't sleep, come into the drawing-room,—
then, take a sheet of paper;' he would then dictate three or f
notes, or a letter, or a portion of some long statement upon which
might be engaged, and then go to bed again.

"His perseverance in small things, as well as in great, was
played in the labour he bestowed on his plantations, which had b
formed upon the roughest ground, and were exposed to those bit
north-east blasts which seemed to preclude all hope of covering
hills with wood. But he spared no pains to accomplish his purpo
reading, correspondence, conversation with men of experience, vi
to nursery-grounds and woods,—every method was resorted to, for
taining information, and securing success: and it was attai
abundantly. Indeed the flourishing plantations at Trimingham
Runton are brought forward as the example of successful planti
in the essay on that subject which gained the gold medal of
Royal Agricultural Society in 1845.

"The rule of Sir Fowell's life was to be 'complete in all thin
and to do well what he did at all: but I ought to observe, that
forming his plantations he evidently derived the greatest part of
pleasure from the employment it gave to the poor.

"His delight in horses was remarkable. I may relate an anecd
which he told me himself, in connexion with one of his favourit
'Poor old Abraham,' he said, 'was the finest horse I ever had in
life. At the time when George IV. was very unpopular, I was ridi
through St James's Park, just as the King passed, surrounded by
immense mob. The shouts and groans and yellings were terri
and there was I wedged in among the multitude, in the midst
noises which might have frightened the most courageous anim
But my noble-spirited horse pricked up his ears, distended
nostrils, curved his neck, and stood immovable. The next d
came the Marquis of —— to endeavour to buy my horse. I said
did not wish to sell him, that he was a great favourite of mine, a

perfectly suited my purpose. Nothing daunted, the Marquis held his ground, made me first one offer and then another, and at last told me that he was not endeavouring to buy the horse for himself, but was authorised to go as far as £500 for a friend. This offer I still refused, when, as a last resourse, "The fact is, Mr Buxton," said he, "it is the King who has sent me to buy your horse, and I hope you will not refuse to sell him to his Majesty." This took me rather aback, but I had made up my mind; so, with very many apologies and regrets, and in the politest manner imaginable, I maintained my ground, and thus the matter ended. What I meant, though I didn't think it exactly civil to say so, was, "You may tell his Majesty that I'm happy to hear he's so fond of a good horse; but so am I, and having got one I mean to keep him!"'

"His generosity was unbounded. I remember, when we were at Bath, his chief pleasure was to look into the shops, and see what he could buy for his family, his grandchildren, or his friends. His manner, too, of making a present was the most agreeable and delicate imaginable. In looking over things, he would sometimes say, 'Well, I don't know which to choose; which do *you* think is the best, Nixon?' And on my pointing out which I thought the most desirable article, he would say, 'Oh, you think so, do you, sir! well, then, put that on one side for Mr Nixon.'

"His public liberality, which is so generally known, was only equalled by his private acts of generosity and charity—acts which were known only to myself and the recipients of his bounty. He appeared totally *unable* to deny relief, where it seemed to be required, although he might feel it had not been merited. Sometimes, when he had relieved the same person several times, he would give me directions to write a rather sharp note, stating that he could attend to no further applications. In the course of the day he would ask me whether I had sent the note. He would then hesitate, read over the applicant's letter once again, and then leaning back in his arm-chair and raising his spectacles upon his forehead, would look me steadily in the face. 'What do you think of it, Nixon? The poor old *villain* seems to be in a bad way, shall I send him a trifle more?' On my declining to give an opinion, he would continue, 'Well, then, send him another sovereign, and as this is the *seventh* time he has promised never to apply to me again, tell him that I give him a trifle *this once*, but only on condition that I am never to see his handwriting any more. I don't wish to hurt the poor old fellow's feelings, but explain to him, in the very civilest terms imaginable, that I'll see his neck stretched before I send him another halfpenny.' Then rising to go out of the room, he would look back before shutting the door, to beg of me 'not to put it *too sharp*,' and to let him see the letter before sending it off. Such was the man—he could not bear to give a moment's pain.

"I hardly ever saw such affection towards little children as his was. Though engaged in the most difficult business, he could hardly make up his mind to turn them out, when they came to him in the study, without a present of sweetmeats or cakes, which he used often to hoard up for them; and if he happened to hear a

child cry in the far-off regions of the nursery, he used to jump u
leaving, in the midst, the most important letter or paper, and cou
never rest till he had gained relief from this, to him, painf
occurrence.

"It would sometimes happen that a little cause of dispute aro
between us, generally some difference of opinion; and I, unfort
nately, could seldom restrain myself from saying precisely what,
the moment, I felt. This used to vex him; but he would say n
thing till the next day, and then, when I thought that the who
matter had passed off, (having perhaps received great kindness in t
meantime,) he would all at once say, 'What a silly fellow you wer
Nixon, to put yourself in such a passion yesterday! If I ha
spoken then, we should most probably have parted. Make it
rule never to speak when you are in a passion, but wait till t
next day.'

"If, at any time, he happened to transgress this rule himself, h
was seriously vexed and grieved, and could not rest till he had
some way made amends for his want of self-restraint. Most me
consider it not very necessary, perhaps degrading, to make an ap
logy to those below them in station; but such was not his cas
The plan of people, in general, is tacitly to acknowledge their err
by an increase of kindness, if they do not actually presume upo
their authority, and make 'might' stand for 'right;' but such w
not his mode of action.

"I recollect one instance well. He was going to shoot at Runto
and just before he was to start I had been urging some poi
upon him, which I knew to be necessary, but perhaps I did
with too great vehemence, and not enough respect. At this tim
the carriage was announced, and he left the room, saying, '
tell you what, Nixon, I don't wish you to come out shootin
with me, and had much rather you would not!' I was sure, ho
ever, that he did not actually mean this; so, after a minute's refle
tion, I mounted the pony and rode after him. When near the Fe
briggs Lodges, I saw the coachman pull up, and after speaking
Sir Fowell, beckon to me. As soon as I reached the side of the ca
riage, he put his hand out of the window, saying, 'Come, Nixon,
know I was wrong; you must not think anything more of what
said just now!'

"I do not put forward these few recollections of Sir Fowell
anecdotes, but merely as rough memoranda; and I am only sor
that I have been able to record so few. In conclusion, I may sa
that it has given me sincere pleasure thus to review the period
my fortunate connexion with him; and that my reverence an
esteem for him are, if possible, increased every time that I am le
to reflect upon his character."

CHAPTER XXX.

In the spring of 1843, he was recommended to try the Bath waters. In a letter from thence to Mr Johnston, after alluding to the poor state of his health, he says :—

"Bath, *March* 3, 1843.

". . . . Now for something better. To use David's words, 'My mouth hath been filled with laughter' since I read in the *Globe*, which arrived yesterday, the account of Brougham asking a question about the slave trade, and of Lord Aberdeen replying, 'that he was convinced the time would soon come when it would be abolished altogether,'

"Pray turn to it, and let P. taste the delight of hearing that debate, and of seeing that, although our good Lord did not think proper to execute *our* plan, it seems every way probable that He is preparing to accomplish the work, which is all that signifies, and all that I care for. If He do but undertake the task, we know that all obstacles are removed, and all difficulties surmounted. It puts me into the greatest gaiety of heart."

TO MISS GURNEY.

"Bath, *May* 19, 1843.

". . . . As to myself, if I am to tell the truth, I do not feel strong, and partly from frequent attacks of illness, and feebleness, and partly from the manner in which my doctor shook his head, I catch myself saying, in the language of Christopher North, 'Though our day be not quite gone by, we think we see the stealing shades of evening, and in the solemn vista, the darkness of night.'

"I called at the Colonial Office when I was in London; James Stephen spoke in such glowing terms of the conduct of the negroes since emancipation, as sent me home quite exulting."

In writing to Mr Scoble, explaining his absence from the Anti-Slavery Convention, he adds, "I can no longer personally unite with you in fighting; but my prayer to God is, that He would stand by all those who are engaged in the holy attempt to put down these iniquities."

He would occasionally express an earnest desire that he might be enabled to work again in the service of Africa; "but," he observed on one occasion, "no matter who is the instrument so that there be successful labourers for God, for Christ, and for man, especially for heathen man!"

The summer of the year was passed very quietly at Northrepps. His extremely feeble health precluding him from exertion, he amused himself with the improvement of his

farm and plantations; while, in the evenings, he delighted to come out upon the lawn, and watch the villagers at their games of cricket. While the force of his mind was waning, his affections seemed to cling with ever-increasing warmth to all who were dear to him. It would be impossible to describe the energy of his prayers while imploring every "good and perfect gift" for those whom he loved, both present and far away; but above all, morning and evening, did his most fervent supplications ascend, that his heavenly Father would stretch forth His hand to deliver "poor Africa."

TO MRS JOHNSTON, HALESWORTH.

"*August*, 1843.

"We have just finished our family reading, and therefore I trust I shall stand acquitted, even in Andrew's eyes, of violating the Sabbath, if I spend a few moments with almost the dearest friend I have. Your image has been present with me all the day. I fear, too, that you are still in suffering. I look about me, thinking what there is that we could do that might add to your comfort. I cannot think how it was that I was so stubborn about that portrait of myself. 'May you have it?' To be sure you may, and I only wish it were ten times more worth your having. I will send it by the van forthwith." . . . .

TO ARCHDEACON TREW, ON ENTERING ON HIS OFFICE IN THE BAHAMAS.

"*October*, 1843.

"There is this comfort in your leaving England, that you are embarked in a noble cause, and if you succeed in obtaining black men, who are truly converted and spiritual Christians, to labour in Africa, it will be worth, not only any inconvenience to which you may be exposed, but the lives of any ten of us. So go in good heart, my dear friend, and the Lord go along with you."

In the autumn he received a visit from the Rev. Samuel Crowther, who, during his visit, preached in Northrepps Church; and Sir Fowell was not a little gratified at hearing an excellent sermon from the lips of a negro clergyman. In his sermon, Mr Crowther alluded to the failure of the Niger Expedition; but, after describing some of its results in opening communication between Sierra Leone and other parts of Africa, and affording great facilities for missionary enterprise, he declared that it had already produced important good, and that "some of those who had sown weeping would yet bring in their sheaves rejoicing; for

what greater joy can there be for them, than to hear that their children are walking in the truth?"

In the same tone Mr Beecham writes, on sending Sir Fowell the Rev. Mr Freeman's narrative of his third journey in Western Africa:—

"You live to see that the Niger Expedition has not been a total failure. It has not worked out its beneficial results exactly in the way which was anticipated; but Almighty God is making it accomplish, in His own way, the good on which your benevolent heart was set. The Niger Expedition has given a new impulse to the African mind, and induced the emigration from Sierra Leone, which has opened the way into Yoruba and Dahomey, and placed even Central Africa within our reach."

These remarks have been strikingly justified by the events of the last few years. The Niger Expedition created communication between that river and England. Hence has arisen that important trade in cotton, and many other articles, which, though still in the bud, is expanding with great rapidity, and bids fair in time to spread civilisation and Christianity through West Africa, while supplying Europe with the boundless wealth of her fertile soil.

Towards the end of November, Sir Fowell sank for a time into an alarming state of debility, with loss of memory, and other distressing symptoms. He frequently put his hands up to his head, as if it were in pain; fetching deep sighs and groans, and tottering even in walking across the room. But his mind, though its force was shaken, was illumined by the sweetest glow of love to God and man. Some one expressing sympathy with his suffering, he replied, "Oh! it is the gracious act of our most merciful Father; let us most peacefully acquiesce." He remarked to his son that he thought himself worse, and that he strongly suspected that his right hand and arm were benumbed. His son tried to turn it off, observing, among other things, "I am persuaded you need not be afraid." "Oh, no!" replied he, with great emphasis, "I am not afraid. Whether for life or death, I am not afraid. I hope it is not presumptuous; I *have* trust in God."

His own trials made him feel most acutely for those of others. Being asked one night why he was sighing so heavily, he replied, "For the suffering that is in the world." Thanksgivings, however, were perpetually on his lips. On

one occasion he exclaimed with great fervour, "O Lord, with my whole soul I thank Thee, that, instead of ease, and prosperity, and the best things of this world, Thou has sent this illness." And afterwards he earnestly prayed that the insight granted him into heavenly things might never be obscured or fade from his view, but that he might ever pant after them, and give his whole soul, and heart, and strength to the Lord, who had mercy upon him.

TO THE BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

"*May*, 1844.

"I have, indeed, been very ill, and am obliged to lead much the life of an invalid; but I am surrounded with blessings, and am, I trust, most truly thankful for leisure and repose. My family are favoured too; my dearest and most invaluable wife in better health than she was a few years ago, my two elder children surrounded with sweet young families, my younger daughter our comfort at home, and my two younger sons just entering life. We have one heavy family cloud—the illness, long-continued and grievously painful, of our beloved sister Mrs Fry. She has been for some months unable to walk or stand, and is deeply afflicted in body; but her faith and hope are preserved in strength, and her reliance on the Saviour is unbounded.

"Joseph J. Gurney is on a missionary excursion in France; all the rest of our families are in their usual health; the Cunninghams rejoicing and labouring as usual.

"I am far more of a Quaker than you are as to these Indian wars. I know every one of them may be called defensive, but the principles and root of all are aggression and conquest. I cannot conceive how our missions are ever to prevail against the arguments of our cannon. Six thousand heathen slain at Gwalior are a terrible set-off against our converts. Yet we are not to be discouraged. I long for the whole Christian world to combine its forces against war. Peace seems to me an object not nearly enough striven for, as lying at the root of all other good.

"One would suppose by my silence that I think nothing of the abolition of slavery in the East Indies. This is very far from being the truth. We do rejoice most truly in what has been done. We know that there cannot be the abolition of slavery, however narrow and jejune may be its details, without a flight of concomitant blessings. But we want to know each and every detail, and we hope you will write without delay, and tell us all about it."

A branch society for the civilisation of Africa had been formed by the Africans at Sierra Leone, and had sent a considerable sum of money to the parent society in England. To their committee Sir Fowell addressed the following letter: —

"TRUMAN'S BREWERY, *June* 7, 1844.

"GENTLEMEN,—I cannot refrain from expressing the very great pleasure which the intelligence of your proceedings has caused in England, among persons so long and so deeply interested in the welfare of the oppressed inhabitants of uncivilised Africa.

"It is matter for great thankfulness to find such exertions for the liberation of the slaves going on in any community, but especially so when set on foot by the very men who have themselves been victims of the most terrible system of cruelty and oppression which the world has ever known. You have, moreover, the credit of setting the example to your fellow-countrymen of what may be done by themselves towards the elevation of their species, and their own liberation from the dreadful evils to which they have been so long subject.

"Be assured that the spirit which this gift evinces on your part, and the anxiety which it displays for the spread of human freedom in the world, for the advancement of education, and still more for the diffusion of the Gospel of Christ among the benighted millions of your country, will not fail to afford the deepest gratification to those who, for twenty years, have not ceased in their exertions or in their prayers for your real and everlasting welfare."

CHAPTER XXXI.

ALTHOUGH in a languid, feeble state of health, Sir Fowell spent a tolerably cheerful summer at Northrepps. In the fine summer mornings he would often rise at four or five o'clock, and go into his dressing-room, where his voice could be heard for a great length of time in fervent prayer. When remonstrated with on the risk to his health, "How could I be shorter?" he replied on one occasion; "I could not stop;" adding, "I have been praying *vehemently* for myself, that I may receive faith, that I may receive the grace of God in my heart, that I may have a clear vision of Christ, that I may perfectly obey Him, that I may have the supporting arm of the Lord in every trial, and be admitted finally into His glorious kingdom."

In the autumn, although he was still able to take a little air and exercise, going out on his cob with his gun, or to visit his plantations, his appearance indicated increased languor and oppression; and he was, to use his own words, "under decayed spirits." Though very unfit for mental labour, he was stirred up to exertion by hearing that im-

portant changes were about to be made by Government in the arrangements for the liberated Africans at Sierra Leone, by obliging them to go at once to the West Indies. He greatly feared anything approaching to compulsory emigration, and warmly objected to the breaking up in any degree of that system of education and training at Sierra Leone which appeared to him, through the blessing of God, just beginning to produce results of extreme importance to to the whole continent of Africa.

He therefore wrote a long and urgent appeal to Lord Stanley, adducing every argument to persuade him to give up the scheme. The composition of this letter cost him a grievous effort. He was intensely anxious to accomplish it, thinking that it might have weight with the Government, and induce them to relinquish what appeared to him so injurious a measure. He would not give it up, but went on making attempt after attempt to finish it; often did he begin to dictate, and then sink back exhausted in the middle of a sentence; then he would rouse himself and try again, till at last it was completed. It is too long for insertion here; but it scarcely displays any trace of the extreme debility under which he was labouring. With this act closed his long and arduous exertions on behalf of the negro race.

The able and successful African missionary, the Rev. Mr Freeman, who had recently returned from an adventurous journey into the kingdoms of Dahomey and Yoruba, came to Northrepps at the end of October, accompanied by the Rev. Mr Beecham.

Remembering with what lively interest Sir Fowell had received Mr Freeman's journals of his two previous visits to Coomassie, which the Wesleyan Missionary Society had sent him as soon as they could get a copy taken, his inability on this occasion to receive the gratification which his friends had hoped to afford him was very painful. He was, in fact, quite unable to enter into the details, which heretofore would have given him so much pleasure. All the incidents of the journey, although related by Mr Freeman in the most animated manner, could not rouse him to make questions or remarks. His family could not but feel that evening that the blow was struck; and, indeed, the

solemn gravity of his own manner shewed that he himself knew it to be so.

On Sunday the 17th of November he went to church; and, according to his custom, gave out the hymns to be sung during the service. One of them was that beautiful hymn, beginning, "All hail, the power of Jesu's name!" In reading the last verse, which runs thus —

> "Oh! that with yonder sacred throng
> We at His feet may fall;
> There join the everlasting song,
> And crown Him Lord of all;"—

so fervent was his emphasis, and so marked the expression of his uplifted countenance, that, on returning home, the Rev. P. C. Law noticed it to his family, and said he felt a strong conviction that he should never again hear Sir Fowell's voice in that church. The presentiment was verified.

On the 5th of December, while sitting in his chair in his dressing-room, he poured out his heart in prayer that he, unworthy as he was, might, without a single doubt, know the blessed Lord to be the Saviour; that he might dwell in Christ, and Christ, through infinite mercy in him, filling his heart with charity, love, meekness, and every grace; that his numerous transgressions might be pardoned; and that, finally, he might be gathered into the land of everlasting life.

Soon afterwards he said, "I feel my faculties and powers obscured;" but added, "my faith is strong." On the 15th of December he was seized with a severe spasm on the chest. While reduced to the lowest state of weakness he was full of the spirit of gratitude, and continually poured forth fervent thanksgivings. His prayers were earnest for "the gift of the most Holy Spirit and the removal of all clouds, that he might come to Christ, under humiliation, suffering, and infirmity; and find strength and consolation, in Him."

Towards the end of January, on experiencing some return of strength, he remarked, "How pleasant is the feeling of rest on recovery from illness, while all our worldly occupations are laid aside!" and when some one observed to him that it seemed like a foretaste of the heavenly rest prepared

for the children of God, he immediately broke forth into prayer for each member of his family, that they might be partakers of that blessed rest, through Christ our Lord. The varied expressions of tenderness for those most dear to him, which were blended with these prayers, were singularly impressive. He continued to take a lively interest in everything connected with his poorer neighbours; indeed, his own needs seemed to open his heart more than ever to the wants of others; so that it was necessary to avoid mentioning cases of sorrow or suffering, from the pain it occasioned him. He took particular care that the villagers should be supplied with soup and other comforts; and never did his countenance brighten up with more satisfaction than when he caught a view, from his bed, of the train of women and children walking home over the grass with their steaming cans and pitchers.

The most cordial welcome was ready for every one who visited him; and his expressions of love continually turned into earnest prayer for them and for all his friends, that they might be given to the Lord for life and for ever!

Mrs Fry, who was herself extremely ill, wrote to him:—

"I must try to express a little of the love and sympathy I feel with and for thee. . . . . How much we have been one in heart, and how much one in our objects! Although our callings may have been various, and thine more extensive than mine, we have partaken of the sweet unity of the Spirit in the Lord. May we, whilst here, whether called to do or to suffer, be each other's joy in the Lord! and when the end comes, through a Saviour's love and merits, may we behold our King in His beauty, and rejoice in His presence for ever.

"My love to you and your children and children's children is great and earnest; my desire and prayer is, that grace, mercy, and peace may rest upon you in time and to all eternity!"

At Sir Fowell's request, the Rev. P. C. Law came, on the 9th of February, and administered the Sacrament to him and to all who were present. At night he began talking, apparently in his sleep, of the conversion of the heathen, and of longing to be at work for them, saying, "I am ready to undertake all the working part." After a time of great exhaustion he said, "Christ is *most merciful—most merciful* to me. I do put my trust in Him."

On the 19th of February he was very much exhausted,

but tranquil in body and mind. Towards the afternoon, symptoms of increasing oppression returned; and as the evening advanced, it was evident that he was entering the valley of the shadow of death. He sank into quiet sleep, his family collected round his bed, but no longer to be recognised by their honoured head; it was only to watch the peaceful departure of the spirit. He lay perfectly still; and, about a quarter before ten o'clock, fell asleep in his Lord.

"Never was death," says Mr J. J. Gurney, "more still, and solemn, and gentle, than on this occasion. . . . . Such an expression of intellectual power and refinement, of love to God and man, I think I have never seen before in any human countenance.

"He was buried in the ruined chancel of the little church at Overstrand. The old walls overrun with ivy, the building itself, with the sea in full view, and the whole surrounding scenery, are highly picturesque.

"The funeral, which was conducted with great simplicity, took place on a mild, sunny winter's morning, and was attended by a large train of relatives, friends, and neighbours. Long before the appointed hour, crowds of villagers were seen approaching the spot, through the lanes and fields, in every direction. All seemed deeply moved. They had lost their patron and friend, and were come to pay him the last tribute of respect and affection. The assembly was by far too large to find room in the church, but great was the solemnity which prevailed in the churchyard while the interment took place. The whole scene was at once affecting and significant; it seemed to speak in the language of David, 'Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?'—fallen indeed, but only to rise again, and to afford one more consoling evidence that, for the humble believer in Jesus, death has lost its sting, and the grave its victory."

A few weeks after the death of Sir Fowell Buxton, some individuals, who had admired his conduct and character, formed themselves into a committee for erecting a testimonial to his memory.

The project was warmly approved. H.R.H. Prince Albert at once gave £50. The other subscriptions were limited to £2, 2s., and in a short time a large list was formed, containing among others the names of many of the most distinguished men of the day, of both sides in politics, and of various denominations in religion. Even more gratifying than all this was the zeal with which the plan was taken up by the negroes in the West Indies, Sierra Leone, and Cape Coast, and by the natives in Kaffraria. Such was the multitude of these grateful subscribers, that £450 was quickly raised, chiefly in pence and halfpence. Altogether, the number of contributors in the West Indies and Africa amounted to upwards of fifty thousand persons. "The proposal," writes the Rev. W. H. Price from Tobago, "was received with lively interest." "The whole island has come forward," says Dr Reddie, in a letter from St Lucia. From Nevis, the Rev. H. Chesborough writes, "Our negro people *willingly* came forward to testify their respect for the memory of Sir Fowell Buxton." The other letters are in the same strain. Nor was this all:—the liberated Africans and others in Sierra Leone had sent £100 towards the monument in Westminster Abbey; but they wished, in addition to that, to have a monument among themselves; they therefore subscribed a further sum of £80, with which they procured a bust, beautifully executed by Mr John Bell, which has been placed in St George's Church at Sierra Leone.

The testimonial, for which £1500 was subscribed, is a full-length statue, executed by Mr F. Thrupp, which is placed near the monument of William Wilberforce, in the north transept of Westminster Abbey.

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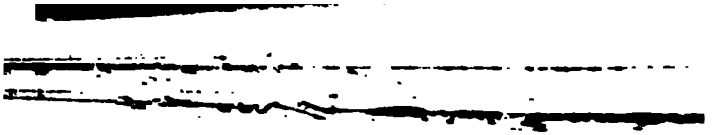

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